

ADULT LEADER

*A Journal of Christian Education and Church Work; with Study
and Teaching Material for the Uniform (International) Lessons*

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"Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."—*John 8: 11.*

"And he that sat upon the throne said, 'Behold, I make all things new.'"—*Revelation 21: 5.*

"O my brave soul!
O farther, farther sail!
O daring joy, but safe! are they not all the seas of God?
O farther, farther, farther sail!"—WHITMAN.

"Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."—*Philippians 3: 13, 14.*

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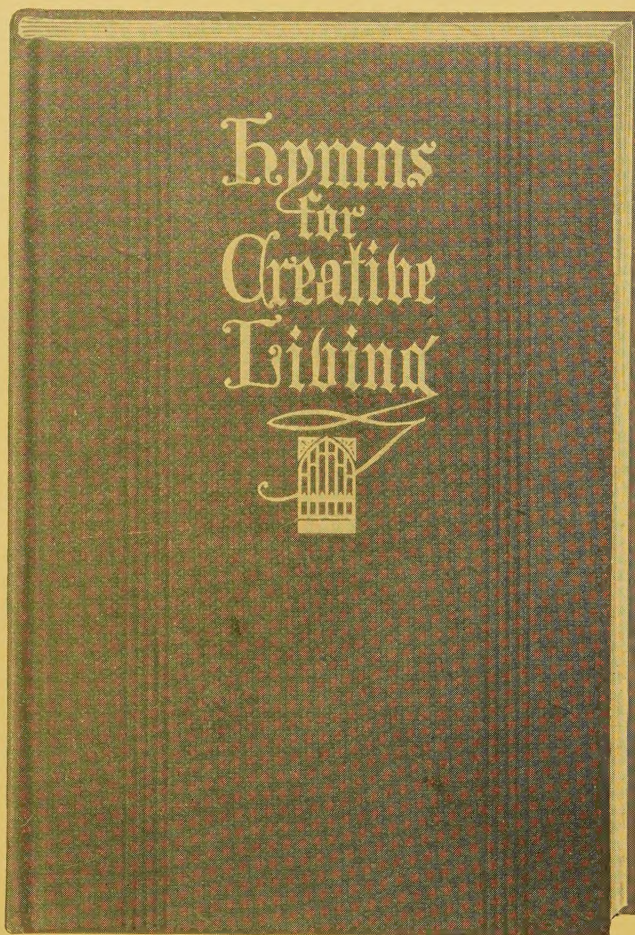
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The Christian and New Time

New time always has a peculiar significance to the
Christian. The morning, the first of the month, the
beginning of the year mean more to him than they
do to others, because the gospel of Christ is a religion
of forgiveness and "another chance," of hope and
promise, and of vast recuperative power. No matter
how untoward one's circumstances may have been in
the past, Christ says, "I guarantee you better and
brighter fortune; and beyond the worst of earth there
is the best of heaven." In Christ there is not only
the regeneration at the beginning, at our conversion,
but there is also the possibility of being repeatedly
"born again" out of failure and defeat, and an old
dead life of sloth and indifference, into a new activity,
and faithful, manly renewed struggle. No Christian
need ever sit down despondent beside the ruined city
of his cherished hopes. For him there is always a
new Jerusalem and a glorious, golden tomorrow.

Christ and the New Year

Jesus Christ is not back there in the used months
where our failures are, and our shame and regret,
and where we lived so unworthily. He is on ahead
in the new year, the new time. He cannot help us
make over and make right the life that has been lived,

but, what is far better, he can lead us forth into a
redeemed future.

In Newness of Life

At this season Christ is saying to us, "Come up out
of that low-vaulted past into the magnificent expanse
of a new year's possibilities, opportunities and hopes.
The walk with me is in newness of life; my service
is in newness of spirit." He bids us, as he did those
other disciples, let the dead past be its own under-
taker, and take with us on our way only that past's
legitimate legacy, its experience and lessons. Here
again Paul was true to Christ's leadership, in his
Philippian Epistle cry, "Forgetting the things which
are behind, I am stretching forward to the things
which are before, onward toward the winning-post
and the prize, Christ!"

Forward with Faith

But the Christian gospel is also a religion of faith.
What this year 1936 brings to us of real blessing is
going to be conditioned and proportioned by the faith
with which we are facing it. Therefore let us not
stand on its threshold hesitant and doubting. If we
confidently believe that it is going to be the best year
of our life, the chances are that it will be. The God
of it will bestow his gifts only into outstretched hands,
open hearts and expectant souls.

Into the Discard

This opportune call is, likewise, away from many
things. It is one of the values of new time for the
Christian that in going on into it he can leave behind
so much of the spiritually damaging and hindering;
that he does not have to drag along the old chrysalis-
sheath of what has been, and been ill. This will be
no new year with Christ for us if we try to live it
burdened with the bad habits and faults that
hampered our lives in the year bygone. In almost
every Christian life there is much that should go into
a bonfire at the beginning of new time.

Above, Where Christ Is

The new time call to Christians has a still more
positive and imperative word: "If ye then were
raised together with Christ, seek the things above,
where Christ is." In a certain sense, that is, to help
and save men, our Lord is always where they are,
walking by their side; but in another sense his way
leads high above the low plain of man's ordinary life;
and he is forever summoning his followers to come
up where he is. When we have attained such ad-
vancement he has gone on still higher; but still he
calls, "Follow me!" So the Christian life that is
not ever advancing, climbing, struggling, aspiring
gets sadly, regrettably outdistanced by its Leader.

Jesus Declares His Purpose

By JOHN SNAPE, D. D., Los Angeles, California

From Tiberias to Nazareth is twenty-one miles. We left Tiberias in a Marquette car, six hundred and eighty-two feet below sea-level, at nine in the morning, and an hour later were at Nazareth, six hundred feet above sea-level. On the way we stopped at Cana, beautiful little pomegranate city, where the miracle of the wine occurred. Two churches are there, the Greek Orthodox and the Roman Catholic, each claiming to be built over the site of the house where the miracle occurred.

What beggars the Arabs are! From the little children that rush up as you come to your hotel, to the Franciscan monk living alone in the hospice at ruined Capernaum, and the Greek priest who smilingly shows you over his little church at Cana, they all have their hands out for bakshish.

At Nazareth we saw the well of Mary, now piped and running full and cold for the use of the people of the town. Without doubt this is the same well from which Mary drew water in the long ago.

Nazareth is about the size of Tiberias, each place having a population of nine thousand. So far as the Gospel narrative goes, Jesus was never in Tiberias—though it was only twenty-one miles away. But he was brought up in Nazareth. I saw some boys in a field at Nazareth, flying a ragged-tailed kite, and I wondered if the boy Jesus flew his kite in the same field. Anyhow, I was in the town where Jesus spent his boyhood—and is a boy ever a boy who never flies a kite!

I had the high honor of preaching in the little Baptist church at Nazareth, whose devoted and successful young pastor is the Rev. Louis V. Hanna, a graduate of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. His wife is a Texas girl. This is the church of which, for nineteen years, the beloved Shukeira Musa was the minister. His tomb rests on the west side of the church auditorium. On the east wall there is a bronze tablet with this inscription:

This building has been erected by Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Bottoms, of Texarkana, Arkansas, U. S. A., through the influence of Dr. L. R. Scarborough—because of their love for Jesus of Nazareth—1925.

What must have been the emotions of Jesus as he came back to preach in his home town—that town in which, as baby, as boy, as youth, as man, he had cried and laughed and played and toiled, a “carpenter’s son” and a carpenter! (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3.) All his neighbors were there, and all were curious to hear the young preacher. Once he took his place among the humble folk of the congregation;

now he—who spake as never man spake—addressed the people; once he listened to the reading of law; now he is both to read and expound it.

The attendant hands him the roll. They watch him as he searches for his text. It was not Isaiah 1: or 32:2, or 51:11, or the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah; it was Isaiah 61:1, with a significant omission—“The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.” When he had folded up the roll and handed it to the attendant and sat down, the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him, for they knew then that he would preach. The sitting posture was the teaching posture of that day.

How the Master divided his text, to which point of emphasis he gave special direction, we cannot know; but he must have made five points, at least, while his old neighbors listened and “the eyes of all in the synagōgue were fastened on him.” At the end of his text he said, “they were all filled with wrath, and rose up and drove him forth out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill that they might throw him down headlong.”

In that declared purpose of Jesus, proclaimed in the little synagogue at Nazareth, is set forth his purpose in life.

1. *A purpose of evangelization*—“to preach good tidings to the poor.” His basic purpose was not a cultural purpose, but a saving purpose. He came to seek and to save that which was lost. He was born to grow; he toiled; he sweat; he suffered; he died; he arose—that he might save that which was lost. Various schemes have been devised for the salvation of ruined humanity, but most of them prove inadequate. By Socialism, by Communism, by Fascism, by Old Age Pension plans, by “Share the Wealth” schemes, men have tried to save humanity, but humanity will always need saving, so long as there is an individual of humanity that is lost. “Evangelism,” once said Henry C. Mabie, “is putting a stick on the clue to its own salvation”; and that was the blessed business Jesus initiated that day in the synagogue at Nazareth.

2. *A purpose of consolation*—“to heal the broken-hearted.” Men are dead in sin—they must be saved from broken-heartedness in life’s unequal struggles—they must be consoled. The dark-plumed messenger paused over the threshold of their door, and “two angels

where but one went in"; but if Jesus enters at same time, light enters. Now may we say to all broken-hearted of the earth who have lost their loved, Death is not the end of life; it is but an aside along the way of life; a way-station on the main line, leading to the Grand Central above. Jesus stands over the graves of his friends, as he stood by the grave of Lazarus at Bethany, and with the wiping of his own tears reveals his sorrowing sympathy for his friends.

A purpose of revelation—"the recovery of sight to the blind." Men needed then, and they need now, that Jesus makes the meaning clear. This age needs interpreters. The trouble with our time is not lack of experience, but a lack of knowledge as to the meaning of experience. Men misread history, misinterpret experience, misunderstand emotion—Jesus and the prophets of Jesus are the interpreters of these mysteries. His purpose was to reveal.

A purpose of liberation—"to set at liberty them that are bruised." The Bible is no longer chained in

a meeting-house, but the souls of men are still bound; bound in error, in habits, in customs, in formalism, in ignorance; and he comes to set men free. A man becomes, the minute he is set free from sin, the bond-slave of Jesus; but the highest privilege of the soul is to set others free. In salvation a man is set free to set free his fellows. Salvation is at once an emancipation and an enslavement. Freed from sin, bound to Christ—that makes every freed soul a missionary.

5. *A purpose of jubilation*—"to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." Notice the significant omission in Jesus' first text. In Isaiah it continues, "and the day of vengeance of our God." When he took his text at Nazareth he omitted that phrase. The reason is not far to seek. Men were living then, and we are living now, in the Jubilee Year—"the acceptable year of the Lord."

This then was his declared purpose; a fivefold purpose that shines for all men like a five-pointed star of hope: a purpose of evangelization, of consolation, of revelation, of liberation, of jubilation.

The Child's Right to Health Protection

By HARVEY DEE BROWN, Ph. D.

Director of the Philadelphia Health Council and Tuberculosis Committee

Two of the nineteen points in which the rights of children of America are formulated in the Children's Charter, adopted by the White House Conference of 1930, are concerned directly with the child's health. These are Sections V and VI. Many of the other rights mentioned in the charter include health protection, although directed toward some other factor of the child's experience; such as recreation, community organization, dwelling-place. If we were to include under rights to health protection, the physical, mental and spiritual well-being to which the child is entitled, there would be very few items in the charter which would not touch upon the matter of health. For obviously, all phases of the life of the child, as of the adult, are vitally interrelated.

Let us focus our thought upon the sections of the charter which deal directly with children's health. They are as follows:

V. For every child health protection from birth through adolescence, including: periodical health examinations and care when needed, care of specialists and hospital treatment; regular dental examinations and care of the teeth; protective and preventive measures against communicable diseases; the securing of pure food, pure milk, and pure water.

VI. For every child from birth through adolescence, protection of health, including health instruction and a health program, wholesome physical and mental recreation, with teachers and leaders adequately trained.

The protection of the child's health from birth through adolescence may be considered in three periods, determined by age, the social factors primarily responsible for his physical well-being, and the changes taking place in the child's own life. There is the period during which the child is at home—the preschool years, which are of great importance in laying a basis for good health later on; following this period comes that of early school life; which is followed by adolescence.

I

In the preschool age the home, the parents, and the brothers and sisters are the main forces that influence the child and bring health services to bear on him. Of primary importance in these years is the health examination. Since it is frequently during infancy and early childhood that conditions develop which result in handicapping the individual in later life, the early detection of these conditions which render their correction possible is very essential.

Parents are usually willing to have children under one year of age examined, but as the child grows older, they are less willing because such an examination is thought to be unnecessary—or to involve too great a cost. Each of the preschool years should, however, have its health examination. In fact, the annual health examination should not end with school-

days, but should be continued throughout the entire life of the individual.

These early years of the child's life, particularly the first, are the time when two preventive measures of proven value should be applied. One is vaccination, which is urged by nearly all physicians interested in children. The best time for vaccination is the first year of life. The other preventive measure which should be utilized is the immunization against diphtheria. This has ceased to be an experiment and should be universally carried out during the preschool years. Early immunization is desirable since the larger percentage of deaths from diphtheria today are during the first year of life. The care of children's teeth rightfully begins in these years. According to reliable data ninety-five per cent. of children suffer from dental caries or cavities. These should have proper attention.

The protection of the child from communicable diseases during the preschool years is one of his essential rights. Since the child's life is so largely lived within the home environment during these years, this right means primarily protection from communicable diseases suffered by other members of the family group. Recent studies in the communication of tuberculosis have shown that the child in the family where some other member suffers from this disease is very likely to become infected. All scientific efforts to combat tuberculosis now endeavor to have all of the members of the family which this disease has invaded examined to find out whether they may have contracted it. Tuberculosis is a family disease, and this family danger is especially great in the case of children.

In the matters just mentioned, the parents are responsible for seeing that the child is protected, calling upon medical, dental, nursing service, and the community for assistance. For pure milk, pure food and pure water, which are essential to health, the family is dependent upon the community. Unless the community's milk supply is officially inspected and controlled, the individual family is almost helpless. The same is true, in a measure, of foods purchased; and is entirely true in regard to pure water.

II

This community responsibility largely characterizes the second period in the child's development—that of early school life. The beginning of school marks an epoch in the child's growth. It is the first decisive step in an adaptation to the outer world outside the home, an adaptation which will continue as long as he lives. The school now assumes part of the responsibility which has been carried by the parents alone. It advises the parents of health problems affecting the child.

An adequate health program in the school will involve many features, some of which are a continuation of the health interests of the home in preschool days and some of which are new. As in preschool days, periodic health examinations, or inspections, fundamental and the defects found should be reported to the parents. The teeth should have careful attention, and the defects should be corrected either by home or by the school dental clinic. Daily health inspections are desirable for the detection of communicable diseases. Examinations made in the school should be followed up in the homes by the school nurse, to see that defects are remedied.

Another essential requirement for child health and protection in school is a building conforming to recognized standards of sanitation and health. It should have, among other things, protection against fire, good ventilation and good lighting. It should have playgrounds, and gymnasiums with showers, lockers and dressing-rooms, together with sanitary provision for drinking water, and hand-washing facilities.

The school health program should also provide adequate health instruction for all grades. Recent trends in health education place emphasis upon health behavior. Practice, rather than theory, is emphasized. The subjects taught contribute to health instruction. The result of this health education should bring to the student knowledge of the structure and function of the human body; the biology of reproduction; knowledge in skills which will enable students to operate in the reduction of accidents; practical knowledge of first aid; information as to the effects of tobacco, alcohol and other narcotics, and pathogenic medicines on the individual and on society; respect for the scientific method as it applies to health; and a specific knowledge of their own assets and liabilities in health values.

III

Both of the statements of the Children's Charter regarding the right of children to health protection include the period "from birth through adolescence." Adolescence spans the period from the child to the adult. During these years profound changes are taking place in the individual, both physically and mentally. There is a sudden spurt in growth and relative instability in the relationship of the various systems of organs at this time. During these years high schools and colleges have a large responsibility for the health of their students. That responsibility rests also upon the churches, and upon other organizations, like the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations. But these do not bear the entire responsibility. There is the responsibility for economic and social life. The individual himself is also becoming responsible for his own life. In grade

physically to be a man or a woman—which is a affair of the adolescent period—the boy or girl comes in part responsible for his own health and fitness. During this period many of the health goods of the earlier years of life are continued and added. The youth needs help in passing through striking changes of these years. One world is behind and a new one gained. It is not without and regret that the old is left, and not without that the child adventures into the new. The importance of the changes of these years has been recognized throughout human history, even by half-civilized peoples. The initiation rites that have existed most universally among savage tribes, and which take place at the beginning of adolescence, mark the change of the boy from the status of a child to that of a man. These rites were often harsh and painful in the extreme, and it is likely that no boy experienced them without a fundamental change of attitude toward his elders and his tribe.

In the transformations of these years the past ideals of the child are not all left behind. Some of them have much influence during adolescence. Preschool and school life have established standards that reach into adolescence. The soundness of these standards aids greatly in the transformation of the adolescent mentally and spiritually. The child has a right to know what is taking place in its life and what its significance is. Such an understanding by the youth of the changes he is experiencing, and of the possible happy outcome of all his restless urges, is probably the best service that can be rendered him, whether by church, school or home. The truth must be given which parallels the stages of his growth.

Dr. W. H. Shea in his valuable work, *The Child: His Nature and His Needs*, says that the instruction which begins in early childhood should be positive and constructive: "If nature is to score a great success in her preparation of the home-builder and family-maker, this preparation must begin in early childhood, must be continued as a definite unfolding of life lessons, and must establish right habits, high ideals and aspirations." He mentions six fundamentals that should be established in the order in which they are given; the first two during early childhood, the second two during preadolescence, and the last two during early adolescence. They are:

- A recognition of the sacredness of life;
- A recognition of the sacredness of motherhood;
- A recognition of the sacredness of the family circle, and fatherhood;
- A recognition of the sacredness of the body as the temple of womanhood or of manhood.
- Establishing wholesome thought, habits—modesty in our daughters—chivalry in our sons;

6. Establishing hygienic habits which will be conducive to the development of perfect physique and the maintenance of perfect health.

The ideals just mentioned have to do with mental and spiritual phases of the adolescent character. But in this period, as in the other, environing influences play a large part in the protection of the growing life.

Most interesting is the plan of the National Youth Administration, recently announced by President Roosevelt. This aims "to mobilize industrial, commercial and educational forces; to provide employment and other practical assistance to unemployed youth; to develop and carry out a coordinated program of work and work opportunities; job training and retraining for unemployed youth in the state; utilizing all public and private agencies, industries, schools and various training facilities which can assist in meeting various phases of the problem."

This program is for persons no longer in regular attendance at school, and not regularly engaged in gainful employment, between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five years. Both sexes come within the provision of the program. In some respects similar programs can be worked out for both groups; in others the requirements will call for quite different plans and set-ups. In certain of these plans—as the community recreational and other leisuretime activities—the joint participation of both groups will often be desirable.

Many other features of the National Youth Administration could be mentioned. It is clear that such a program of nation-wide scope for children of the ages sixteen to twenty-five, having to do with their economic and working life, will supplement the many efforts of churches, schools and young people's organizations in fulfilling their obligations to the adolescent youth of the country.

IV

The care of the health of the preschool child, the protection of the early school years, and the protection of the adolescent, were presented at the White House Conference as rights belonging to all children regardless of race, creed or economic standing. It is not then a matter of altruism or benevolence, but of simple justice and social obligation to provide all children from birth through adolescence with the things which make for health and fullness of life. Parents, churches, schools, industry and society have these obligations resting upon them today.

"RELIGION will meet us, not on the level of our weakest moments, but on the level of our strongest. It will give us power rather than satisfaction; courage to face danger rather than safeguards against it; inspiration rather than explanation."—L. P. Jacks.

The Use of the Bible in Christian Education

By HENRY H. MEYER, Ph. D., Th. D., D. D.

Dean of the Boston University School of Religious and Social Work

Christian education, as understood by those most successful in this field today, *seeks*, (1) *to foster the growth of Christlike personality in the individual, and by this means* (2) *to promote the continuous improvement of relations between persons and groups in human society.* The inspiration and guidance for both these endeavors is derived primarily from a rich, cultural inheritance of religious insight and experience reaching back to the experience and teachings of the Hebrew prophets, poets and sages, and of Jesus and some of his immediate disciples. There can be no serious question, therefore, concerning the importance of the biblical records (both Old and New Testaments) for any effective program of Christian education. All arguments against this use of the Bible, in so far as they are valid, are in reality arguments against the misuse of the Scriptures, that is, against their less effective use, still all too common in current church school practice.

In the teaching use of the Bible two guiding principles are of the utmost importance. These may be stated as follows: *Any use made of the Bible in present-day Christian education should be in harmony* (1) *with the best available interpretation of the content and purpose of the biblical materials selected for teaching*, and (2) *with the best modern theory and principles of education.* Correct biblical interpretation is primarily a matter of adequate knowledge concerning the historical setting and the teaching purpose of the separate books (Scriptures) composing the Bible. Such knowledge results in a sense of the relative and functional values of the different portions of the Old and New Testaments, and makes possible a wise selection and placement of biblical materials in the educational program.

The prevailing theory of education in America demands that *the curriculum of Christian education shall have as its central content a graded series of creative, purposeful activities in harmony with the spirit and conduct of Jesus, the Founder of the Christian way of life, and which at the same time are vitally related to present-day tasks and problems of daily living.* This conception of the curriculum presupposes on the part of teachers and parents and of all who participate in the organization and conduct of Christian education a knowledge of the life and teachings of Jesus, and a measure of personal and group experience in translating his spirit and principles of conduct into effective, fruitful living amid the confused and rapidly changing conditions

of our modern world. But such knowledge and insight leading to such experience, once more, are to be gained in large part only from a study of words and works of Jesus and the experience of his first disciples in creative, triumphant living in an environment as confused and as rapidly changing as our own. For this reason the study of the New Testament, and more particularly the Synoptic Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, will always constitute an important part of the program of leadership training for Christian education, as well as finding appropriate use in the curriculum of graded activities (including story projects) for children, young people and adults in the church school.

But the New Testament account of the influence of Jesus on his immediate disciples, and through them on the larger fellowship of first generation Christians, is thoroughly understandable only against the background of the cultural inheritance and religious faith in which both Jesus and all of his earliest disciples were brought up. Next to the New Testament, therefore, parts of the Old Testament Scriptures, especially the inspired utterances of the Hebrew prophets, the devotional Psalms, the Ten Commandments in their Deuteronomic setting, parts of the historical narratives, and selected sayings of the Wise-men of Israel (Proverbs), will likewise find a permanent place in the total program of Christian education. It is important, moreover, that the materials selected for both the Old and New Testaments for purposes of Christian teaching be studied in the full light of modern knowledge, religious and scientific, bearing in mind the human experiences and aspirations which the passages record. Techniques and procedures of Christian teaching, as in all education, can be effective only where the content of experience is adequate and where its interpretation is based on sufficient knowledge and correct understanding.

To teach the Christian way of living is to find and arrange opportunities to act in harmony with that way. Character grows through repeated right responses in concrete situations involving relations with other persons and to God, the supreme Valuer of persons. It is obviously impossible, however, to condition the environment of any growing person to the projects and enterprises in which that person actively participates, together with the relations with other persons which he thereby establishes, should afford opportunity for all the desirable and essential responses conducive to the growth of Christian character.

er. The number of *right responses to all sorts of situations involving possible moral and ethical growth, however, be indefinitely increased by what may be called the ideational extension of actual experience of the growing person.* Such ideational extension of experience is achieved by means of imaginary participation in the moral and ethical struggles and vicissitudes of other persons—either the experience of living persons or that of men and women recorded in the annals of religious history. It is at this point that the historical narratives of the Bible, both from the Old and New Testaments, assume added importance in religious education. The Bible is primarily a record of the aspirations and experiences of a deeply religious people intent on discovering and doing the will of God, who were on the whole remarkably successful in their attainment of insight into his character and to his purposes, but who were hindered again and again in their moral and spiritual growth by their own ignorance, weakness and wrongdoing, or from without by overwhelming circumstances which broke down their courage, determination and faith. In other words, the Bible narratives furnish so many pictures of human experience on a religious level, reflecting both the frailty and the strength of human nature in meeting opportunities and temptations alike; experiences, in other words, which in their essential character are similar to those which growing religious persons of today have in their circumstances and amid other conditions of life. It is through the imaginary participation of the growing person in these experiences of men and women of other times and other civilizations that the range of their own experience is enlarged in an otherwise cramped and therefore spiritually hampering environment.

In no phase of religious experience and growth are we more indebted to the Bible than in the experience of worship. It is not that one may not worship without any reference to the Bible—as in the presence of the glorious sunrise, or in the contemplation of the mystery of life and the sacredness of personality. It is in worship that man experiences supremely the presence of God. For the devout soul all of life may come, as for Brother Lawrence, the “practice of the presence of God.” If so, then life becomes a continuing experience of communion, devotion and guidance, that finds expression in prayer, praise and joyful, self-giving service. It could not be otherwise than that the Bible, the great source book of religion, could abound in records of worship experience, and the inspired literature of worship—prayers of inspiration, songs of thanksgiving and declarations of faith and devotion. The wealth of such material in the Bible makes it the book of common prayer and praise of all mankind. To it the teacher of religion

turns instinctively, both for inspiration and for concrete worship materials for diverse occasions and for all age groups.

Growth in Christian character further requires the projection of an ideal self and an ideal social order, constantly advancing beyond the point of actual achievement, and providing at once the motive and the ideal of human conduct. Loyalty to this ideal self and to this ideal of human society is the most powerful of incentives toward Christlike behavior, and toward active participation in enterprises seeking the improvement of relations between persons and groups (national, cultural, economic) in an unceasing endeavor to build a better world. The kingdom of God is this better world. The righteousness of God translated into personal character is this ideal self. But the kingdom of God and his righteousness, as objects of man's highest loyalty and most serious endeavor, are ideals set forth by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, which is part of the Gospel record. It is the pursuit of these ideals, through study and through experimentation in daily living, that will always constitute the guiding motif of any series of creative activities worthy of a place in the graded curriculum of Christian religious education.

An Adult World

We must reach adults if we are to have any considerable measure of success in the regeneration of individuals or the reconstruction of society. It may be true that the race moves forward on the feet of little children, but it is also true that the movement will move only so fast and so far as the adults permit. This is an adult world. Much as we may sentimentalize over the rights of childhood and the importance of youth, it is the adults who make the decisions, run the government, make war and peace, cause depressions, foment strikes, even determine the education which children are to receive. Without relaxing our efforts for childhood and youth, we must yet realize that education for the new and more Christian social order must be education of the adults of this generation.—Paul H. Vieth, in “*The International Journal of Religious Education*.”

WE are told that the people of Christ's day were amazed at his teaching because he spoke as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Only an expert can be an authority on anything, and an expert is one who has proved his ability both by theory and experience. It was because Jesus knew not only the theoretical side of spiritual truth to the last jot, but was also triumphant in the practical experience of living that he spake and still speaks as the ultimate authority.—F. S. Crossman, in “*The Maritime Baptist*.”

Finding Reality in the Ordinance of Baptism

By FREDERICK E. WOLF, Poultney, Vermont

The present-day attitude toward baptism indicates a growing unanimity as to its authentic form and spiritual efficacy. Where formerly it was tied up with unreality because held to be a saving ordinance, today almost none of that is present in the minds of thinking people. Scholars of every type of church are agreed that Jesus was immersed, that baptism is not in itself a means of salvation, that it must be preceded by saving faith, and that it is the believer's badge of obedience. In the plan of Jesus it was all of these and essentially much more.

Baptism is that other Picture Gospel which Jesus placed at the center of the Brotherhood of Believers. Complete in itself, it is a constant witness to the absolute necessity of the new birth. Our Lord said to Nicodemus, not ye may, but "Ye must be born again." This ordinance, properly administered, keeps before the church the central, vital fact that the believer is dead to sin, is buried with Christ, and is now raised to a new life. It is this essential truth that needs continually to be exalted in the life of the church. Stripped of medieval theories and malpractices, it never offends in our search for spiritual reality. On the contrary, it is in just this experience that the believer finds the reality for which he has been seeking.

And yet in many churches the act of baptism is anything but spiritually significant. Often it is a spectacle of the crudest sort. All interest is focused on how much water is used; every physical detail of the ceremony is played up; and vulgar curiosity is centered on the reaction of the individual to the water. This smacks of the cheapest vaudeville and is entirely out of place in the house of God. Performed in such spirit and manner, baptism is an offense to all Christian people of finer sensibilities.

Whereas baptism may be and should be made the most beautiful and significant ordinance of the church and feature of its worship program. Some years ago I was fortunate in being associated with James D. D. Comey, at that time organist in the First Baptist Church of Boston. He had written a beautiful musical setting for the scriptural baptismal words that were used in that church. I have made use of it ever since. It is a responsive service in which the words of the minister are answered by the chanting of the choir.

MINISTER. Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

CHOIR. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

MINISTER. And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.

CHOIR. And Jesus, when he was baptized went up straight way out of the water, and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the spirit of God, descending like a dove, and lighting upon him.

MINISTER. And lo, a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

CHOIR. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

MINISTER. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

CHOIR. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

With us baptism is usually administered in the evening. The baptistry and entire front of the church are banked with palms and potted plants. When the time for baptism arrives, the lights are dimmed and Holman Hunt's picture, "Jesus the Light of the World," is thrown on a screen over the baptistry. The minister enters the water and begins reading the service, with the choir responding. At its close the candidate steps into the water and is baptized, as the choir sings "Jesus calls us; o'er the tumult of our life, wild, restless sea"; then the minister ends the service with the usual formulas and benediction. Some persons have told me that it is the most beautiful baptismal service they have ever witnessed.

But before you can have constant baptisms the church must be a soul-seeking fellowship. The church achieves its reality in winning others to Christ. Yet in many churches baptism is not thought of except at Eastertime, or after "special meetings." The evangelistic passion must burn unremittently in the heart of the church. The necessity of the new birth must constantly be emphasized. Unless this is the case, the church will die. Here is the note of reality in religion that the world is seeking: Winning others.

How can the church release its evangelistic hunger? Where will opportunity be given to win others to Christ? The old type of evangelism has been replaced in some churches by a cold formalism, the product both of the worship service itself and the new type of church architecture. We have swung all the way from the sawdust trail to the refrigerator. Reality lies somewhere between these extremes. It will be found where Jesus placed the emphasis—in a quiet, normal, yet courageous confession of him as Lord and Saviour. Therefore, at the close of every sermon—and what a touchstone for sermons it is!—the invitation to accept Christ should be given. Not with any high-pressure methods, but in a manner entirely in keeping with a reverential service of wor-

ip. The hymn is announced, the invitation is given, the minister walks to the center aisle to receive any who may come forward; during the last stanza of the hymn he walks to the rear and pronounces the benediction.

And what has happened? From time to time, boys and girls, young people, fathers and mothers, yes, grandparents, have come down the aisle gladly, sometimes in tears, to accept Christ. In one case three generations were baptized at the same time. Another time the invitation was omitted because it was a musical service, but at the close a mother said, "Oh,

why did you omit the invitation? My two grown daughters were here this morning ready to accept Christ." That taught me a lesson! On Armistice Day, at the close of a sermon on world affairs and peace, a young mother and a girl of fourteen came forward and made their public confession of Christ.

The church must sound the evangelistic note in every service. Here the religion of Jesus strikes reality. A beautiful, significant baptismal service, used again and again throughout the year, will help make of the church a soul-winning fellowship that will never know defeat.

No Alibis :: AN EVERY-MEMBER CANVASS PLAYLET

By ELWOOD L. HAINES

SCENE. A living-room.

CHARACTERS. George Murray and Mary, his wife. Tom Andrews and Agnes, his wife.

AGNES. By the way, George, I hear you're going to be a canvasser at the church again this year. I should think you'd get sick of asking people for money. What do you do when they don't want to give?

GEORGE. Oh, I make them want to. Didn't you ever find yourself buying something from a salesman because he talked you into it?

AGNES. Not these days, if I can help it.

TOM. Well, suppose you try your luck on me, George, just for a little practice. I think the church is spending too much for non-essentials.

GEORGE. What do you call non-essentials?

TOM. Well, look at \$2,250 for religious education. When I went to Sunday school they didn't spend anything, except about a hundred dollars a year for lesson-helpers and candy at Christmas.

GEORGE (*laughing*). Maybe that's why now you don't like to go to church any better than you do. But let's be serious a minute. Two thousand two hundred and fifty dollars is about nine per cent. of our budget, or about thirteen dollars per pupil. Do you really think that's too much to spend for teaching your child religion?

AGNES. The candy bill in our family comes to more than that; not to mention movies nearly every week.

TOM. Well, look at missions. I never did believe much in missions anyhow. It seems to me there are enough poor sinners who need our help right here in town—not to mention the rest of America.

MARY. Why, even I know the answer to that. I read somewhere that life in the world today has become a bit like living in a New York apartment-house.

You live so close to your neighbors that it's mighty important what kind of neighbors you have. Sleeping-sickness and influenza can come over to us by steamer from the other sides of the world nowadays. Conditions in China or South America affect our business, don't they? Look what a war scare does to the stock-market! Look at this depression!

TOM. Look at it yourself. I don't want to.

GEORGE. I know a better reason than that. Strange as it may seem, I've been reading a book. It's by a man named E. Stanley Jones. He says that if Christianity isn't worth exporting it isn't worth keeping. That made me think of things like soap and kerosene oil—things we need here, but they need them in Asia and Africa as well, and business men know it. If Christianity helps people to live better lives, it's our job to give it to them, and incidentally, we help ourselves too.

TOM. But there are so many things to give to—I never know where I stand. Community Chest, Y. M. C. A., the Children's Hospital—how can they expect a person to have anything left to give to the church?

GEORGE. Did you ever add up all your charities for a year and see what they amounted to?

TOM. You bet I have. Every March, when I have to fill in my income tax return.

GEORGE. What percentage of your income did it represent this year?

TOM. Oh, I never stopped to figure it out. Maybe two per cent.

AGNES. I don't think we give so much, Tom, when you think of what we spend for other things. There are the children's shoes—

TOM. What, do they need shoes again?

MARY. Two cents out of every dollar isn't much to give the church, is it, when you think of all the church stands for? I wonder what it would be like living in a place where there were no churches? I

wouldn't want my children to grow up in such a community.

AGNES. Neither would I. Do you know what I read in a magazine the other day? It said that fourteen cents of every American dollar is spent for luxuries, and three-fourths of a cent goes to religious agencies. I guess we're above the average, Tom. But there isn't a one of us who doesn't pay out more for things we could do without than to the church.

TOM. How in the world is a man to know what he ought to give?

GEORGE. Did you ever try budgeting your giving, just as you figure how much you ought to spend on clothes, in proportion to your income? Think how easy it would be for the church to do its work if every member rated it equally as important as clothes, or education, or insurance!

MARY. He's got you there, Tom. But what are you going to say to a person like the woman I talked to at the Garden Club the other day? She said that the church never did anything for her, so she didn't see why she should do anything for the church.

AGNES. Maybe she never gave it a chance. I don't know who the lady is, but it's my guess that she never did anything for the church, or she'd know better. I know the church never helped me much until I began to go to the services and work in the auxiliary. Isn't there something in the Bible about the giver receiving good measure heaped up and running over?

GEORGE. Sounds familiar. I know a lot of people like the one you mention, but if I mentioned their names, everybody in town would know by tomorrow morning. I met one fellow in the Community Chest campaign last spring—

TOM. Hold on a minute. You're getting too personal for comfort. I don't go to church very often, and I certainly don't belong to the woman's auxiliary. Why isn't it all right for me to give something when I do attend, and let it go at that?

MARY. Just like paying admission, eh, Tom? That's all right for a movie-theater, but it won't do for the church. You see, Tom, the church is like a family—every member must take his fair responsibility, or it's unjust to the others. And a church has to plan its work, just as you have to plan your business. It has to depend on definite financial assurances, not on occasional spare change.

GEORGE. Just as if you were a farmer, Tom. You'd make a queer one, I admit, but suppose you were, and you needed a new sprayer, or a milking-machine. Wouldn't you have to have some idea of what your wheat or your dairy would bring in before you could order them?

TOM. Maybe so. But it seems to me that there's too much organization in the church. Why can't each

man work out his own religion for himself, instead of being bothered with all this machinery?

AGNES. Don't be ridiculous, Tom. Why did you go to a university, instead of studying with a pin knot and a piece of charcoal, like Abraham Lincoln? Why did you join a college fraternity, instead of living by yourself in a little room on the back street? Why would you rather play golf with some of your friends than alone?

GEORGE. Sure, Tom. Why do you work for a big soap company, instead of boiling soap in a kettle, and peddling it from door to door? You know quite well that everything in life has to be organized, for mutual helpfulness and general effectiveness. You can't get away from it. And you can bet your life that nobody gets very much personal religion when he tries to work it out all by himself.

TOM. You folks are all steamed up tonight. I guess I started something I can't finish. By the way, to change the subject, what do you think of my new car?

MARY. It surely is a beauty. Must have cost you something, Tom.

TOM. Oh, not so much. I'll have to scrimp somewhat on my personal budget for a while, but it's worth it.

AGNES. Tom says he'll let me drive it if I promise to get my hair done only every other week.

GEORGE. *There's economy for you!* Now, to get back to the Every-Member Canvass. How about cutting down on your personal budget some more and raising your subscription to the church? We're going to need a lot more money this year—

TOM. Aw, you're too good. I'll bet you looked up all the answers in the back of the book. I'll tell you what I'll do, George. If you come around the first Sunday in November, I'll stop "alibi-ing" and see what I can do.

(FINIS.)

TIMES APART—WITH GOD

AN ANNOUNCEMENT

For eight consecutive years *A Quiet Talk with God Each Day*, a daily devotional book, which was prepared by the late J. Sherman Wallace, was issued from The Judson Press. The little volume had a remarkably large sale and became precious to a large number of Christians, who used it in their private and family devotions or as a Bible study handbook. *Times Apart—with God* is not intended to continue *Quiet Talks*, but rather to take its place and accomplish a similar ministry. It has been made by one of our prominent denominational workers, Dr. Charles S. Detweiler, whose experience as a pastor, missionary, and missionary secretary renders him thoroughly acquainted with the spiritual needs, ambitions, and devotional requirements of the people in our churches, church schools, young people's societies, and other organizations and groups. It is based on the daily Bible readings recommended by the denomination; beginning January 1, 1936. It will contain about 270 pages, and cost 40 cents, postpaid from the Society's Philadelphia headquarters, or any of the branches.

What Is Leadership Success?

By HUGH KING HARRIS, Grand Rapids, Michigan

How often have we wished and prayed for greater success as leaders, teachers, educators? In an age pressing high efficiency, how efficient are we? Is there in us a negation of doubt, a barrier of fear? Have we measured up to our responsibility?

Self-questioning serves as a soul tonic. It is well times to become retrospective, to forego the academic and routine, to vision facts and conduct a strenuous bit of self-analysis. To attain real leadership one must develop mentally, morally and spiritually. In teaching others one must assimilate the lesson set for the class.

So much has been said and written relative to teaching that it might seem there exists a futility of pedagogic words, rules and ideas. Some there are who know in their hearts that they cannot become successful teachers, yet everyone is a teacher. Through contacts, by examples and by human relationship those about us are influenced and so taught by our words and actions.

Christian education stands as the most vital need on earth. If we can teach, if we can associate ourselves with Sunday school and church endeavor, if there is a sense of duty, responsibility and the urge to labor in this way in Christ's vineyard, strike out and take that all-important first step. As one enters into the work—labor of love—there will daily come wisdom and great increasing ability.

Back in my boyhood days in Toledo, Ohio, in the church where Emory Hunt was pastor, Mr. Lamson, a leading dry-goods merchant, was my Sunday school teacher. His class of boys were his loyal friends. He seemed a hero to me, as he did to the others. Through the years I can still visualize this earnest, practical teacher who actually exemplified what I am saying. Our class used to resolve itself into a round table. Each boy was given the opportunity to ask or to answer questions, according as he would. No problems were left unsolved. Religion was made as practical as bookkeeping. We were "sold" on Jesus, God, and the Bible; living realities which neither time or circumstance could alter or detour.

Later, at Albion College, Michigan, I roomed at a conference with an interesting Bible teacher. He had charted a few basic principles, a little personal, intimate program, which he confided had gone far in his class leadership. It was headed simply, "I WILL."

Seek counsel in prayer before each class meeting; asking the divine Teacher to grant me some of his precious influence.

See my work as a responsibility and view my efforts with a truer vision.

Discover new opportunities every day through personal contacts.

Be friendly, not critical, and grant others a full measure of credit.

Make perfection my goal.

Remain true to my highest ideals, and develop mind and spirit through prayer and zeal for the truth.

Be humble, yet ever alert to expand the work at hand.

Forget the rain and the clouds, and labor as though the sun is shining and life is a song.

Be diligent to analyze and understand the lessons which I shall present to others.

Cooperate with everyone associated in the work of church and Sunday school.

Grant credit—and give thanks to God for his gracious blessings.

Such was the personal program, written in a well-worn pocket Bible of a devout and efficient young leader. And for all leaders may I add this statement and confession of my own:

I place all of my affairs lovingly in the hands of the Father. I know that because in the divine supply there is abundance for all, no one can take from me that which is mine. In the divine plan some child of God needs and can profit from the opportunity that is now in my hands. Therefore I need not outwardly concern myself with the working out of that plan except as I am divinely directed. All my activities as a leader and teacher will conform to the inner, spiritual leading that comes to me, and I will not struggle or become anxious about it. Humbly I give thanks that I am an instrument for his cause, which is the universal cause of good, and I will rejoice in the outcome of the divine handling of my stewardship.

God speed the day when we may see all men actively engaged in doing the Father's will, and in the doing finding "the laborer worthy of his hire."

True leadership rests in the acceptance and application of divine principles. The best way to progress is to face problems with an open mind, adopt the most feasible course, then call upon the divine, inner power which so surely indicates the wisdom of such decision. If there is no light, no definite mental and spiritual certainty that the course in view is the proper one, then accept the inspiration to turn to some other solution. It is human to err; mistake may enter in; yet as decisions are thus guided mentally and spiritually, eventually limited human knowledge and verdicts will decrease, and true leadership, based upon truth and wisdom, will become a blessed reality.

Home Missions, an Expression of Faith

By COE HAYNE, Litt. D.

(The following is an excerpt from Doctor Hayne's "They Came Seeking," one of The Judson Press' recent publications. The book may be ordered from the Philadelphia headquarters, or any of the branch houses; \$1.00 postpaid.)

Down through the decades every great political, social, or economic upheaval has brought in its wake a missionary opportunity.

What are the chief divisions in the home mission enterprise but mile-stones as Northern Baptists have endeavored to keep step with the nation's growth?

The population movements westward gave birth to our work upon the frontier.

Work among Negroes—missionary and educational—had its beginning before the close of the Civil War.

The development of railway transportation necessitated a further increase in the missionary forces in remote Western areas.

The vast industrial growth of the United States, bringing alien millions to our shores, also brought to our doors a staggering need and an inspiring opportunity—the evangelization of foreign-speaking people.

The Spanish-American war had its spiritual aftermath on every isle beneath the Southern Cross.

The World War precipitated a sudden exodus of black people from quiet Southern cotton-fields and plantations to the roaring industrial infernos of the North that has no parallel in the history of any race.

The demand for cheap labor in the Southwest and Middle West started another population avalanche—an interminable stream of Mexicans across the border.

We saw city and rural situations become increasingly complex as restless, questing people sought to adjust themselves to strange conditions that had arisen like yeast overnight.

And what of today?

Tremendous and unforeseen population movements have furnished open doors for service: People from the countryside pouring into the city—Older Americans fleeing to the suburbs from congested areas of the cities—Vast numbers of *foreign-speaking people* finding homes in rural sections—Overcrowded conditions of churches in *Latin America*—*Bacone College* turning away scores of Indian boys and girls every fall because of lack of equipment—Increasing demands of *Negro churches* for trained leadership and the necessity of improving the equipment of *Negro Colleges* to meet this demand—Neglected Indian fields in *North America, Mexico* and *Central America* offer amazing opportunities for the presentation of the gospel.

"As long as we have such great tasks of adventure

to call out the best of our best elements in our land declared Dr. Arthur W. Rider recently, "we do not need to fear that the race will deteriorate nor nation turn to militarism to grow stalwart characters in the citizenship. As long as there are unexplored areas undeveloped regions, will the divine urge of God the soul lead us outward and onward. As long as there are great moral, educational, social areas unconquered by the spirit and mind of Christ, there will the Christian pilgrim and patriot be needed, under the discipline of that Great Adventurer."

Do we not believe that inherent in the church is the power to meet *every God-given task*?

The denomination was aroused to missionary action when Judson sent his appeal from Burma. We responded when San Francisco was torn by an earthquake and nearly wiped out by fire. We responded when the Lone Star Mission was jeopardized. We responded when vast industrial districts were created within a space of weeks and began the building of Christian Centers. We responded when Puerto Rico was swept by a hurricane. We responded when we understood how critical had become the cause of Christian education in Burma.

We are in a period of far-reaching economic readjustment. In our extremity God may see his opportunity.

In 1837, when the nation was in the grip of one of the severest financial panics of its history, The American Baptist Home Mission Society sent word to John Mason Peck that its treasury was at such low ebb that there were no funds for the struggling church he had founded in the Mississippi Valley. Peck did not give up. The word surrender was not in his missionary vocabulary. He asked permission to visit the stronger churches of Illinois, Missouri, Indiana and Kentucky in behalf of the weaker churches on the frontier and the funds he solicited saved the western mission.

Thus in courageous faith were born the independent State Conventions of the West.

There is a sure dynamic for every sincere Christian motive.

Christ in every home to win America for Christ is the motive that has given birth to a missionary enterprise shot through with prayer, experience and accomplishment.

Confident that the evangelization of America is indispensable to World Evangelism, Northern Baptists support a splendid company of commissioned workers under the direction of our two Home Mission Societies, The American Baptist Publication

society, and the State Conventions and City Mission societies. They may be found from Alaska to the West Indies.

When we think of these marching columns of men and women let us not forget another great body of workers—our *first-line men*—the pastors within the territory of the Northern Baptist Convention whose burdens yearly become heavier and whose faith has

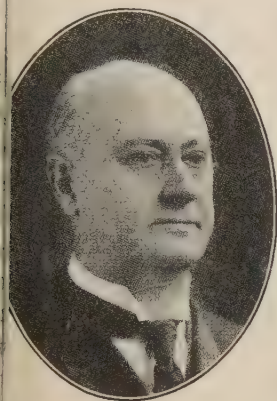
mounted with their toil—a devoted band among whose coworkers the missionaries in the field and the men and women at the various mission headquarters are proud to be numbered.

Whatever may be the immediate outcome of our anxieties, let us hew out of the wilderness of our doubts and hesitations a new conception of the term “pioneering.”

Sunday School Leaders I Have Known¹

By W. EDWARD RAFFETY, Ph. D., D. D., Redlands, California

I. CHRISTOPHER R. BLACKALL



It was my great privilege to become successor to Doctor Blackall as editor-in-chief of the Sunday school publications of The American Baptist Publication Society in Philadelphia. That day will not be forgotten when he put his hand on my shoulder and said, “My young brother, I am for you with all my heart. I am praying for your success.” And he meant it. He was eighty-six years old. In very truth he became a big brother professionally, and a wise father spiritually. He lived to his ninety-fourth year. The Society had retired him on full salary, and given him an office at headquarters, and utmost freedom from responsibility. He was active mentally until near the end, working in cooperation with John Wanamaker on a history of the Pennsylvania Sabbath School Association.

Born at Albany, New York, September 18, 1830, he died in Philadelphia, January 21, 1924. In early manhood he considered the ministry, law and medicine. Medicine won, and he was graduated from Rush Medical College, Chicago. The Civil War found him at the front, a big, robust army surgeon, doing hardest service. War over, he returned to Chicago, where he practised medicine a few years, and then to become general superintendent of the Chicago Sunday School Union, succeeding John H. Vincent, afterward Bishop. With Dwight L. Moody, T. Jacobs and William Reynolds he plunged into organized Sunday school work. “Plunged” is right, for C. R. Blackall whatever he did always made a hundred per cent. investment of his vigorous personality in it, like his friends Bishop Vincent and Edward Eggleston—veritable pioneers, all of them, in the great Sunday school cause.

In 1867 he began his long career with The American Baptist Publication Society; serving, in order, and successfully, as western district secretary, as branch-house manager in Chicago and New York, and finally as editor-in-chief of Sunday school publications. Through all these years while denominationally employed he was also interdenominationally minded, having official relations with the International Sunday School Association, the International Sunday School Lesson Committee, the Philadelphia Association, and on the board of the Pennsylvania Sabbath School Association, where he was in close fellowship with H. J. Heinz and John Wanamaker. With John McFarland, he took the initiative in the organization of the Sunday School Editorial Association (1901); which in turn became the nucleus of the strong Sunday School Council of Evangelical Denominations (1910); which in 1922, at Kansas City, merged with the International Sunday School Association to become the International Sunday School Council of Religious Education; later the International Council of Religious Education.

Doctor Blackall was a man of strong convictions, wise counsel, indefatigable labors. He was cautious, but cooperative; conservative, yet with an open mind and a forward face; Baptist, but brotherly toward all believers. He was a front-ranker in all progressive religious education movements. Mrs. J. W. Barnes, of the Methodist Episcopal Board and the International Sunday School Association—lone woman for years on the International Sunday School Lesson Committee—told the writer that in her fight for graded lessons for children she found in Doctor Blackall a most sympathetic friend.

In the midst of exacting administrative and editorial duties he found time to write scores of pamphlets, several cantatas, half a dozen books, hundreds of magazine articles and more than fifty hymns.

We had many hours together. His reminiscences were always refreshing and informative, his energy contagious, his unbounded faith in Christ and the world's children a constant inspiration. It was a joy-

ous, grateful moment in my life when I penned the following dedication, and showed it to him, before sending the copy to the printer:

To

CHRISTOPHER RUBEY BLACKALL, D. D.

EDITOR EMERITUS

Fifty-eight years connected with The American Baptist Publication Society, serving for thirty-five years as Editor-in-Chief of Sunday School Publications—and American Sunday School Pioneer, statesman, and prophet—virile, versatile, and efficient as writer, editor, and leader—the new Keystone Series of International Graded Lessons is affectionately dedicated.

The Sunday School Worker for September, 1920, was a C. R. Blackall number. Scores of eminent leaders sent "Greetings to the grand old man of the Sunday school world, ninety years young." And the sheaf of the flowers of friendship was his while living—as so often isn't the case!

Those of us today who are proud to be known as "Christian educators" must not forget the debt we owe to those sturdy pioneers, Blackall, Vincen Cowden, Broadus, Rexford, Hamill, Schauflier, Richard Maclaren, Hall, Errett, Hazard, Potts, Randolph Hartshorn, Fries, Moore, and others who were called "Sunday school workers."

Unifying the Local Church Program¹

By FORREST L. KNAPP²

The emphasis of the International Council "The Church Presses On," comes just when there is widespread interest in bringing unity into the program of the local church. In conferences of ministers and laymen, everywhere, one hears the question, "How can the numerous organizations and activities be brought more closely into harmony with one another and integrated into a unified whole."

Recently the International Council completed a document which deals primarily with this problem of unification. It is Book 6 of the *Curriculum Guide*, and is entitled "The Organization and Administration of Christian Education in the Local Church." While written particularly for the professional leaders in national and area agencies of Christian education, it is available to any interested person. It should be of distinct interest to ministers.³

The purpose of this article is to present in brief form some of the ideals toward which Book 6 suggests that local churches should move.

The fundamental ideal suggested in the book is that there should be recognition of a common purpose throughout all phases of the church program. Possibly, if the question were asked in specific form, the officers of the woman's missionary society would say that their fundamental purpose is similar to that of the church school, or of the men's club; but it is doubtful if this admission would be made by all leaders of all organizations, unless it were strongly pressed. There cannot be unity in the church unless there is a realization that the major goals of the church are the goals toward which their group should

strive. There may be a variation in emphases—and no doubt should be—but the variations should be in light of the underlying purposes. It is the church's business to make the Christian religion effective in personal and social living throughout the entire world. Whenever any group in the church, or any church, allows such secondary matters as often occupy attention to obscure the far-reaching objective of the function of the church and of its organization cannot be effectually fulfilled.

Next to the importance of a common purpose is the importance of a common method. Formerly the method of Christian education was rather narrowly conceived. As a result of the careful study that has been given to the way in which Christian personality develops, the method of Christian education has broadened until today it is conceived as comprehending every specific method that may legitimately be used by the church. Or, to put it another way—and without employing the term "Christian education"—the church should use that fundamental method which is based upon the ways that God has established for the growth of persons and groups. In one sense the method may take several forms; which may be spoken of as different methods; but there is only one basic method. This method, discovered by a study of the laws of God, is the method of Christian education at its best. The conclusion is, that every aspect of the church's program should be educational in its procedure. Which does not mean, for example, that there may not be preaching, but rather that preaching should take into account the best findings of educational psychology. It does not mean that there should not be emphasis upon what has been known as "the evangelistic method." It does mean that the evangelistic method at its best and the educational

¹ This is one of a series of articles arranged by The International Council of Religious Education to make effective the current emphasis on rethinking the church under the slogan "The Church Presses On!"

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³ The price is fifty cents.

method at its best merge into one and the same thing. Although this idea is fairly easily stated, it will not be made completely effective in all activities of most churches without a long process of gradual growth in understanding.

Growing out of a common purpose and a common method, there comes the realization that the major program elements in the local church should be built to form a unified whole. This means, not that there shall be absolute uniformity, but that every aspect of the program shall be planned with a recognition of its relationship to other aspects of the program. It implies, also, that all the religious needs of all persons in the church constituency shall be taken fully into account. And again, that no single organization shall have an independent program for any group unless that organization has responsibility for the total program for that group. Even then plans will not be independent, for they will take account of relations among groups. When there is proper unity in the church program, democracy will operate, and each person will share in the program development, so far as his ability will permit. One practical illustration of this ideal may be found in the church worship service; for the standard here described will prevent the officers of a church from planning the Sunday morning service for adults and then expecting all persons of every age to share in it.

If there is to be unity in the program and in the development of the program, there needs to be unity in organization and administration. Instead of having numerous comparatively independent and unrelated organizations, every group should be under the direct or indirect supervision of a central board or committee. In the administration of the affairs of the local church the pastor will be the chief administrator, and will be in a position to exercise general guidance of all that goes on.

The limits of this article do not permit detailed illustration of what is involved in a unified organization, but unity in organization and administration is of such importance that every pastor and every layman would do well to make a study of it.

A consideration of the ideals that have been suggested will make clear and emphatic the necessity for specific leadership education for every worker in the church. In the past it has been assumed that leadership training was primarily for the teachers and officers of the church school; but this position no longer is tenable. Thus Book 6 of the *Curriculum Guide* recommends that every church build a comprehensive program of leadership education. This must not only provide for the needs of every worker, but it must be continuous, and based upon long-time planning.

Another ideal suggested for the local church by

Book 6 is that the church should do much more than it has in the past to reach out into the homes of its constituency, to undertake directly to influence the life of the community of which it is a part, and to relate itself closely to all character-building agencies. Obviously the church cannot do the whole job by itself, and not in glorious isolation. Moreover, it must no longer assume that it will reach its goal if it depends merely upon what it can do for those persons whom it can entice within the walls of its building. The local church must be a leavening influence in the life of the entire community. It is a unit in a world enterprise, and as such is confronted with demands for the finest kind of cooperation with all agencies and all people that are seeking the well-being of mankind.

The signs indicate that the next ten years will see important changes in hundreds of churches in the direction of greater unity. Those church leaders who are alive to changing situations and to advanced thinking will begin now to study their programs and organizations with a view to giving intelligent guidance to the changes which appear to be inevitable.

Forward with Christ

The Christianity of the new day will have as its motto "Forward with Christ." H. G. Wells describes God as going through the world with fifes and drums. That is an essential characteristic of the Eternal Christ. He is a Christ of forward-moving purposes. He is not satisfied with the world as it is. He hears fifes and drums. He would have men see life as an adventure, an enterprise courageous and costly, a deed to be done for God. Under the spell of his leadership men find themselves saying with David Livingstone, "I will go anywhere provided it is forward." They come to appreciate the spirit of General Booth when he said, "One can keep company with Christ only when running at full speed." There is no doubt that the principles of Christ afford the only adequate solution to the evils that exist today in the commercial, social and international sphere. Let such principles as the sacredness of human life, the supremacy of the spiritual, the mutual dependence of one man upon another, and the all-pervading principle of good-will make their gracious influence felt in the totality of human activity and we will soon witness some wonderful transformations.—A. M. McDonald, in "The Illinois Baptist News."

THERE is much justification for the statement that the educational program of Jesus was a movement among adults. By reaching the adults Jesus was certain to pass on to the young people and the children the contents of his message.—Earl F. Zeigler, in "Toward Understanding Adults."

THE ORGANIZED CLASS



Berean Bible Class,
First Baptist Church,
Fort Morgan, Colorado

THE Berean Class of the First Baptist Church, Fort Morgan, Colo., was organized about ten years ago. During the whole of this time it has been taught by Mrs. W. S. Kaull. She travels more than forty miles each Sunday to do this. No wonder that she is reported to have said, "This class is the big thing in my life." In the group picture Mrs. Kaull is seen in the center of the front row. J. A. M. Crouch, who has been superintendent of the school for the past twenty-five years, appears at the right, with the church's senior deacon, F. W. Freeman, at his side. To the left is the pastor emeritus, Rev. A. H. Ballard, and the present pastor, Rev. A. G. Batstone.

THE Co-Workers Class of the First Baptist Church of Cambridge, Ohio, was organized in 1886 by Mrs. John Amos with thirteen members, three of whom are still active in the class. The present membership is fifty-one. The officers are: President, Mrs. C. E. Williams; vice-president, Mrs. Melvin Coss; secretary, Mrs. H. B. Squibb; treasurer, Mrs. W. W. Suitt; missionary treasurer, Mrs. Charles Patterson; teacher, Mrs. Harry Amos; assistant teacher, Mrs. David Robison. The superintendent of the school, which has an enrolment of approximately three hundred and fifty, is Vergil Ross. The pastor of the church, which has a membership of between five and six hundred, is Rev. Thomas D. Rees.



Co-Workers Class,
First Baptist Church,
Cambridge, Ohio

RECENT BOOKS

Order All Books from The American Baptist Publication Society

BLUE GLASSES AND HARMONY. The play given at the Northern Baptist Convention under the name "The Christian Family." The American Baptist Publication Society. 16 pages. Price, 15 cents.

The presentation of this play was one of the features of the Northern Baptist Convention at Colorado Springs. Dr. John H. Skeen, pastor of the First Church, played the leading rôle, "Mr. Christian," and the direction was by the joint author, Doctor Powell. The idea was to call attention to the emphasis that the Northern Convention has of late been placing on the Christian Home and Family Life. It is published in the belief that many of our churches will care to use it in one of their services or at some entertainment.

GUIDING INDIVIDUAL GROWTH. By Roy A. Burkhardt. The Abingdon Press. 1935. 205 pages. Price, \$1.25.

An excellent discussion of a phase of Christian education that has been sorely neglected. With all the emphasis that Protestantism has given to the so-called "personal gospel," it is strange how little attention has been paid to the technique of individual guidance. This book not only presents in clear-cut and understandable terms the need for personal work with individuals, but gives suggestions for doing the job. Every parent, pastor, Sunday school teacher and adult counselor, or for that matter, anyone dealing with persons, will find the book helpful.

LUPITA: A STORY OF MEXICO IN REVOLUTION. By Alberto Rembao. Friendship Press. 1935. 180 pages. Price, \$1.00.

A "transcript of the titanic struggle now going on at the heart of the Mexican nation." The narrative form makes for interested reading without in anywise limiting competent analysis of the cross-currents—political, economic, and spiritual—to be found in Mexico today. That there is a way out for Mexico is made clear; but if Mexico is to find and take that way out the evangelical Christian forces in Mexico must be strengthened to meet the antireligious movement arrayed against them.

LATIN AMERICAN BACKGROUNDS. By Winifred Hulbert. Friendship Press. 1935. 209 pages. Price, cloth, \$1.00; paper, 60 cents.

Those who this season are making a study of missionary conditions in the Latin American countries will find in this new book a wealth of condensed information. The geography and history of these lands

are set forth, while special attention is given to currents of life and action that concern the work of the evangelical churches.

GENERAL EVANGELINE BOOTH. By P. Whitwell Wilson. Fleming H. Revell Company. 1935. 127 pages. Price, \$1.00.

In this volume the journalist author of *The Christ We Forget* pays tribute to the Salvation Army and the consecrated woman who is now its leader. Mr. Wilson gives us not so much a documented history or biography as an interpretation of the spiritual purpose which the Salvation Army, from its founding, has had as its dynamic. It is a gracious appreciation of a saintly life and an earnest preachment which the world today sorely needs.

BERMUDA TROUBADOURS. An Anthology. Compiled by William Griffith, Claude Kendall and Willoughby Sharp, Inc. 93 pages. Price, \$1.00.

Margaret Widdemer found the island "far too heavenly and remote from the troubled outside world to have its sunny serenity profaned by cloudy versifying"; nevertheless she and many other poets have written delightful verse about Bermuda; its

Beauty and quiet, warm air and the sea—
Had for the taking here on every hand.

The best and most appealing of these poems have been assembled in this most attractive little volume. They range from seventeenth-century Waller down to writers of our very day. Wedding-journeying couples who make as so many of them do the voyage to Bermuda should take this book with them, and it will be an appropriate gift for any of your friends who are going or have been there.

WHAT CAN CHRISTIANS DO FOR PEACE? By Theodore Ainsworth Greene. Published 1935. 61 pages. Price, 25 cents.

Treats of the development of the Christian attitudes toward war and peace, and how these attitudes have been reenforced by a realistic study of the evils and futility of war, the various causes of war and the tensions which exist between nations that lead to warlike attitudes. The author was Chairman (1931-1934) of the Commission on International Relations of the General Council of Congregational and Christian Churches.

THE ROMANCE OF LABRADOR. By Sir Wilfred Grenfell. The Macmillan Company. 1934. 329 pages. Price, \$4.00.

With a wealth of scholarship and personal experience Doctor Grenfell tells of this little-known land—its geology, history, peoples, flowers, birds and fishes.

He helps the reader see, moreover, the real human values that are involved in his work. On laying the book aside you feel that you have gained a worthwhile acquaintance with that rugged coast and with the Indians, Eskimo, and the hardy fisherfolk who inhabit it.

It is included among the books recommended this year for missionary reading.

TRAINING FOR CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP. By A. Earl Kernahan. Fleming H. Revell Company. 1935. 125 pages. Price, \$1.50.

The first fourteen chapters set forth the qualifications for church-membership as recognized by the larger denominations. These statements of denominational practice were contributed by representative pastors. That for the churches of the Northern Baptist Convention was furnished by Rev. William Sale Terrell, pastor at Binghamton, N. Y. There are three chapters on "Training for Church-Membership," and then a dozen or more brief chapters on "Christian Attitudes" to be cultivated. The book impressed this reviewer as being too brief to do full justice to so important a subject.

GUIDING THE EXPERIENCE OF WORSHIP. By Marie Cole Powell. The Methodist Book Concern. 1935. 263 pages. Price, \$1.10.

Planned primarily as a text-book for use in training situations, this new book on worship deserves careful study and wide use. The material has been organized with a training group in mind and lends itself particularly well to such use. However, anyone responsible in any way for planning and conducting worship services will find here a wealth of helpful suggestions. The eleven chapters treat of following topics:

"What Is Worship?" "Aids to Worship," "Making God Real," "Planning the Worship Program of the Church," "The Services of Worship," "Materials of Worship," "Visualization Materials in Worship," "Music in Worship," "Prayer in Worship," "Preparation for Worship," "The Leadership of Worship."

THE ANCIENT WORLD. By T. R. Glover. The Macmillan Company. 388 pages. Price, \$2.50.

Far more than we used to think the scene of the Bible, especially of the New Testament, is that Mediterranean-bordering part of the globe where ancient history in general—the Greco-Roman—played itself out. For even a superficial understanding of the New Testament some knowledge of ancient Greece and Rome is indispensable—and this is an ideal hand-book on the subject. If we were selecting an adult Bible class teachers' "book of the month,"

it would certainly be our first choice. Doctor Glover has the double advantage of being learned in the classics and also a learned theologian. His style, too, makes for interesting reading: crisp, clear, familiar. And one is startled to find him bringing that old world into 1935 England and America. Doctor Glover is public orator to the University of Cambridge and the author of many books that have had a wide reading. English Baptists have much reason to be proud that this distinguished scholar and writer is one of their leaders (he is an ex-president of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland).

"IN GOD WE TRUST"—AND WHY NOT? By William H. Ridgway. W. A. Wilde Company. 118 pages. Price, \$1.00.

Why not be as optimistic as the little red cent? Here is a small book with a great big message for all who are tired of the present status quo. The author, a captain of industry, a Y. M. C. A. leader, and a lecturer, remembers the difficult times that followed the financial "panics" of 1873, 1892, 1907 and 1920, and the remedies that made an end of them. He firmly believes that a rebirth of faith would soon end the depression, improve business conditions, brighten the financial outlook, and raise the spiritual level of everyone in the land.

FAMOUS CATHEDRALS AND THEIR STORIES. By Edwin Rayner. Grosset & Dunlap, Inc. 48 quarto pages. Price, \$1.00.

An attractive and informing volume, telling of the building of the great European cathedrals, and their significance in history and religion. On forty-eight quarto pages, 9½ by 12 inches, there are seventy black-and-white photographs and eleven color plates.

FINANCIAL RECOVERY FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH. By Julius Earl Crawford. Cokesbury Press. 1934. 204 pages. Price, \$1.00.

A timely, worth-while book dealing in a helpful way with the financial problems besetting the local church. Based on sound principles of stewardship. Recommended to pastors, deacons, trustees, treasurers—all who have responsibility for the financial well-being of the churches.

Lesson Topics for February

- February 2. JESUS ENLISTS HIS HELPERS. Luke 5.
- February 9. JESUS INSISTS ON RIGHTEOUSNESS. Luke 6.
- February 16. JESUS HELPS A DOUBTER. Luke 7.
- February 23. PEOPLE BEFORE PROPERTY. (May be used with temperance application.) Luke 8.

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS IMPROVED UNIFORM SERIES

(First Half of a Six-Months' Course.—Studies in Luke)

FIRST QUARTER, 1936: JESUS MEETING HUMAN NEEDS

AIM. From a study of Luke's Gospel to learn the love, sympathy, and helpfulness of Jesus in meeting human needs; to set forth the ways in which he meets these same needs today; and to inspire his followers to service for others in the name and spirit of Jesus.

These lessons are developed from outlines prepared by the Committee on Improved Uniform Lessons of the International Council. The outlines are copyrighted, 1934, by the International Council of Religious Education and are used by permission.

LESSON I. JANUARY 5. A MOTHER'S VISION AND INFLUENCE

Luke 1. (Verses printed, Luke 1: 46-58)

GENERAL THEME: A MOTHER'S SONG

Prepared by MITCHELL BRONK, D. D.

Devotional Reading for the Opening Service: Luke 1: 68-79

KEY VERSE: My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.—Luke 1: 46, 47

46 And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,
47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
48 For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.
49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.
50 And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.
51 He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
52 He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree.

53 He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.
54 He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy;
55 As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.
56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.
57 Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son.
58 And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her.

"This peculiar honor was not for the rich or those who had received worldly fame; it was reserved for her who, though she could trace her lineage back to King David, was a peasant woman, living in an obscure village, that nestled among the hills of Galilee. That God should draw her into fellowship with himself and make her a partner in the mystery of the Incarnation places her high in the list of those saintly souls who through meditation, prayer, and implicit trust, become the friends of God."
—The Lesson Commentary.

"How all the poor, tawdry mythology which has clustered about her and called her the Queen of Heaven, disappears before the vastly deeper beauty of this true woman of the earth, who wins our confidence and love."—Phillips Brooks.

"The mother's art is perhaps the most difficult in the world. What shall we say of her that undertakes to mold the mind of immortal man, to prepare it to be steadfast amid the trials of life and then to pass to the spheres of endless glory?"—Robert E. Tyler.

The bravest battle that ever was fought; Shall I tell you where and when? On the maps of the world you will find it not;

It was fought by the mothers of men.

—Joaquin Miller.

The Lesson Before Us

I. THE MAGNIFICAT. Luke 1: 46-55

Mary's hymn has been thus designated from the Latin word with which it begins. We may call it the first of all Christian hymns, the Benedictus (ver. 68-79) being the second. The suggestion to utter it may have come to Mary from Hannah's song (1 Sam. 2:1-10) with which almost every Jewish woman will have been familiar. It was, moreover, natural for an Oriental woman when emotionally moved to express herself in rhythmical language. Mary will

A Bible Message for Every Day

Monday. A Mother's Song. Luke 1: 46-56. Jesus tells us—in the parable of the Lost Sheep—that he would have given himself to save any single individual. Why then should a woman not break out in song when such a precious gift is presented to her?

Tuesday. A Mother's Joy. Luke 1: 57-66. And her joy is not selfishly her own—but that through her motherhood coming generations are to be blessed.

Wednesday. A Mother's Heart. Luke 2: 41-52. There are said to be those who shun parenthood because of the burden of it. Mary came to know that (cf. 2: 35), but she was "blessed among women." Love fully compensates!

Thursday. A Mother's Dedication. 1 Sam. 1: 21-28. I am not so much concerned about the manner of the dedication, whether it be public or private, in church or in the home, or just in the parent's heart and prayer—as I am that there shall be a real consecration of the little one to Christ.

Friday. A Mother's Confidence. John

2: 1-10. There is the old story, that his mother's kiss made Benjamin West a great artist. Would more children "turn out well" if there was more faith that they would, on the parent's part—joined to more parental determination?

Saturday. A Mother's Sorrow. Luke 7: 11-17. The miracles are parables. The interpretation of this? That Christ is the compassionate friend, the friend of last resort, of the sorely bereaved—and in particular when it is a mother, and a widow!

Sunday. The Mercy of God. Luke 1: 68-79. Theology applies many impressive terms to God—some of them awe-inspiring—but none of them appeals so strongly to the human heart as that he is a God "of tender mercy" (ver. 78; cf. James 5: 11).

At the Threshold of the Lesson

For facts about the Gospel of Luke—which we are to study during the next six months—and its writer, the reader is referred to the editorial pages of this quarter's "Adult Class."

have thought much, and wondered deeply, on the journey, about what God was doing with her.

Some translators have arranged the song in strophes. Goodspeed makes four, each containing two meter lines, or stichs: ver. 46-48; 49, 50; 51-53; 54, 55. It employs parallelism, the distinguishing mark of Hebrew poetry; e. g.,

My soul doth magnify the Lord,
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God
my Saviour.

The word "cousin" in verse 36 is, literally, "kinswoman." "Hill country" (ver. 39) might mean almost anywhere away from the coast south of the plain of Esdraelon. We have no further knowledge as to just where the home of Zacharias and Elisabeth was. From the delicate hint here, and Matthew's plainer statement, it is evident why she sought this seclusion.

In biblical language soul is the natural life, with its affections and emotions, the spirit the diviner and loftier region of our being. The expression "God my (our) Saviour" is found also in 1 Timothy 1:1 and Titus 3:4; the phraseology of Isaiah 12:2; 25:9, might be so rendered. Mary's warrant for her confidence that future generations are to be blessed in her is the angel's word (1:28ff.). "We cannot but wonder at the vast faith of the despised Virgin of Nazareth—whose inspired anticipations have been so amply fulfilled" (Dean Farrar).

The song betrays the nationalism of Mary. Something of her joy is due to the confidence that the One to be born will put down that hated Roman government that had been bleeding her people Israel well-nigh to the death. The Magnificat, however, is animated by a new and higher spirit that lifts it above any of the lyrics and psalms of the Old Testament. It has been called "a mosaic of Old Testament imagery and language," showing how deeply Mary's mind had been colored by her people's Scriptures.

There were two prevailing views as to how the "deliverance of Israel," which the Jews were expecting—or at least hoping for—was to be brought about: the eschatologic, catastrophic, and the Messianic. The majority of the people awaited a king who should restore in some form the mighty rule of David. Their later Scriptures were vibrant with pictures and foretelling of this Messiah. May we not believe that almost any pious expectant mother—Mary among the rest—cherished the longing that it might be hers to bear him, the Messiah King? The annunciation had overwhelmed Mary, not with pride—there is none of that in the song—but with the gladness of the high honor that the song voices.

II. A MOTHER'S INFLUENCE

Is it not significant that in the gospel dispensation the Saviour of the world is Mary's—a woman's—Son? Apparently

even he needed the guidance and devotion of a mother that he might grow up into his divine career. And this in a Jewish environment where the father is all in all!

In our social order the father is the support and honorary head of the family, but actually the mother is its dominating personality and spirit. This obviously gives her a commanding and decisive influence over the lives of the children, especially during the formative years. A very busy business man told me that he had carefully figured out that his wife is with their children eleven times more than he is.

When I asked, in a company of about four hundred people, all those to stand who believed that they were Christians directly or indirectly through a mother's influence, more than two-thirds thus responded. Yes, almost always the mother is the priestess of the home who leads us in the years of childhood into the holy places of the life with God.

III. "BLESSED AMONG WOMEN"

While we Protestants condemn Mariolatry, the worship of the mother of our Lord, we cannot but accord her a holy reverence that we do not bestow upon other women of the world's history. In her motherhood has received its supreme glorification. The thought of her reacts upon and colors our thinking and our love for our own mothers; and conversely we transfer to her all the beautiful things that we see in the mothers of men.

We do not like to think of Mary as being simply an instrument in the Incarnation and the plan of redemption. God chose her from among all womankind. The angel says it: "Blessed art thou among women!" (Luke 1:28.) ("The reward of all mothers was in her heart as she felt the aimless dabbling of his hands and the soft, wet warmth of his mouth. In her eyes was the light of Israel's hope; the light that had shone in the eyes of three centuries of mothers, suckling their first-born and praying that their man-child might be Messiah."—Robert Norwood.)

So we feel warranted in attributing to her all the graces that enrich womanhood and make a soul beautiful. Without sentimentality, we enhalo her with loveliness. We sympathize with the painters who refuse not to make her face fair and winsome. ("To drop the serene face of the Madonna from the art history of Christendom would inflict upon us an irreparable loss."—Margaret Sangster.)

IV. THE SECRET OF MARY

There are aspects of Mary's life that piety is reluctant to scrutinize, experiences of hers that it dares not attempt to analyze. How she became the mother of the God-Man is a holy of holies where devout faith hesitates to enter. We would not profane her with a sort of cold psychoanalysis. We are satisfied with

the brief, simple, delicately-told recital of the Gospels. What she thought about it all was her secret. She "pondered" it in her heart, but her reverence and Oriental-woman modesty, to say nothing of the mystery, would impose silence.

V. MARY AND JESUS

It is a permissible inquiry: What was Mary's understanding of her Son's personality and mission? Did she sometimes question the foretelling of the angel, that he was to be the Lord Messiah? (Luke 1:32.) It would seem so. Once she joined with his other kindred in trying to restrain what they deemed extravagance, or fanaticism, in his actions (Mark 3:21, 31; Luke 8:19-21). Her views of the Messiahship and Kingdom could not have been unlike those held by the Twelve, and like them she will have been perplexed, or disappointed, when he made it out altogether otherwise than they had expected. Or the marvel of her Son was too great a fact easily to be believed even by her.

But this is a common experience of motherhood: To have the child's career and accomplishments become so momentous as both to dazzle and to mystify the mother who has remained in an humbler background. It takes on a hateful aspect when the mother grows jealous of the son's work and fame.

It is unthinkable, however, that Mary did not believe, to a certain degree, in her wonderful Son. We have evidence of it. For example, at the Cana marriage supper, conscious of his mysterious power, she tells the servants to follow implicitly his bidding. When the end came, she was down there at Jerusalem among those who had followed thither his desperate fortunes. She was a mother, and a mother's faith in her son is one of faith's high-water marks.

VI. JESUS AND MARY

How the Lover of Men must have loved that mother of his! I like to think of their intimacy during the "hidden years" at Nazareth. Did he sometimes go to her for help, as he was threshing out the problem of his destiny and facing the ministry to which he was beginning to know himself called? Other sons do that. The father may be the wiser, but it is to the mother that they have recourse.

How much did she contribute to her Son's divine-human character? That character unfolded, and meanwhile he was in her charge ("subject unto") there in the intimacy of that humble home (Luke 2:51, 52).

We wish we knew more about it. Not for worlds would we be without that touching final glimpse of this relationship that John has preserved for us (John 19:25-27), that says so much, that is such a revealing of the affection of our Lord for his mother. She was the dearest, if not the only, earthly possession he had to bequeath, and he committed her to the disciple that they say he loved

best of all. Weighted down now for one awful moment with the sin of the whole world, and unable to find his Father's hand in the darkness—still he is solicitous about Mary's welfare in the days after he shall be gone! What a lesson for sons, and daughters!

Practical Questions for Class Discussion

- ¶ What Old Testament prophecies may be taken to refer to Mary, to the mother of the Coming One?
- ¶ In what words and acts of Jesus, in the Gospels, might one look for traces of his mother's influence?
- ¶ As many an expectant Jewish mother

must have said to herself, "Shall I perchance hold in my bosom the Anointed, or his Forerunner?" should not modern prospective parents cherish the expectation that their child be, one consecrated to the Lord, a man or woman who shall prepare the way for the Lord Christ into human hearts—by becoming, not necessarily, a priest, prophet, preacher, but anyhow, a good honest worker in the church of God?

- ¶ Are not Christian married people, who could be godly parents of healthy children, and wisely rear and properly provide for them, shirking a Christian duty when they by choice remain childless?

TEACHERS' HELPS

In the Men's Class

Charles C. Stillman,¹ Columbus, Ohio

The "weaker sex," as applied to woman, may be all right as a sentimental gesture, but in my judgment the characterization applies only as to physical strength. Courage marks the career of woman in every department of life's activities. Who suffers more in war, the son sent to the battle-line or the mother at home praying for her dear boy with agony of heart? Who bears the burdens of industry and commerce, the workman and the office-man, with a panoramic procession of events day by day, or the housewife and mother with multitudinous duties exacting in their perennial demands? The father is out in the market-place earning bread and butter, but the mother is at home transmuting that economic sustenance into character and life for their children.

A revolting thought is that the gangster has his "moll"—a misguided woman attracted by the "caveman" fallacy; yet the gangster's woman displays misplaced courage as great as any shown by the outlaw to whom she devotes herself.

The slave owners of Virginia in 1855 offered forty thousand dollars for the arrest of Harriet Tubman. And who was Harriet Tubman? Only a slave who escaped to Canada, but went back to the South to organize freedom for other slaves. Reading the sign offering the reward, she took a train farther South to carry on her rescue mission.

Even though history has been written—generally speaking—from the standpoint of the preeminence of men, we

find abundant evidence of the place of woman as a determinant in history's course. Sometimes the influence is for good and sometimes for bad. In contemporary history, for example, witness Madame Lupescu and King Carol of Roumania. In the United States it is generally understood that the wife of the President has exercised tremendous influence over Mr. Roosevelt in shaping executive procedure along lines of social experimentation. The pages of the past are spotted with names of women of weight and power: Cleopatra, Catherine II, Elizabeth, Victoria, and so on for scores and scores of names.

An organization has just been formed in this country with the object of organizing public sentiment in favor of placing a woman in the office of President of the United States. Which is greater—woman in the home or woman in a career?

Is it wise to promote the idea of martyrdom as centering around the thought of mother? Is there danger that social custom will put onerous duties upon mother in the home when those duties could well be assumed by other members of the family? Is there any valid reason why the sacrifice laid upon motherhood in the course of nature should indicate a continuous sacrifice of time and energy by mother, as though nature intended her for a slave to the whims of growing and grown children? Is Mothers' Day in danger of becoming an emotional outlet serving as an excuse for year-round neglect of the dearest and best friend each of us ever had? While we sing of mother's sacrifice, let us work for mother's peace.

Before My Class of Women

Olive Woodward Ogg, Monroe, Iowa

INTRODUCTORY

Since this lesson is the first of a six-months' study of the Book of Luke, and begins the closing year of a five-year cycle of Bible study, we shall want to

devote a few moments to introduction, noting that Luke's is the fourth Gospel studied in the series, and that the general topic, "Jesus Meeting Human Needs," is particularly appropriate as expressing that phase of the life of the Messiah which Luke emphasizes. Luke's key phrase is "the Son of man," his key verse 19:10, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." We shall wish to note also what is known of Luke himself, that he is the "beloved physician" of Colossians 4:14, and the faithful friend of 2 Timothy 4:11; that he was for a considerable time the companion of Paul's missionary journeyings (note the "we" of Acts 16:10, occurring frequently thereafter). Luke seems to have been a Jew of the Dispersion, tradition says of Antioch. He is more accurate in his use of Greek than are the Palestinian writers.

It is always desirable to be able to think through a book of the Bible, chapter by chapter. The lesson plan for this six months will be most helpful to such an undertaking, especially if note-books are kept and the book outlined week by week.

MARY AND HER SONG

Nowhere in all Scripture could we find a passage more intimately sacred and appropriate for our women's classes than this about the sweet, holy mother of our Lord. Let us approach it with deep reverence and with the fervent prayer that we may grasp its full message for us; and understand the character and mission of this woman whom our heavenly Father chose to trust and honor as no other was ever honored and trusted. For granting the full deity of Jesus and his unique endowment, it still remains certain that the Father chose to place him in that earthly home and early environment best suited to assure him the perfect development noted in Luke 2:52.

1. *Mary's home.* Though Bethlehem was the ancestral home of Mary and Joseph, Nazareth was the place of their abode. Nazareth is a little town, with narrow, terrace-like streets, situated on the lower hill slopes that bound on the west the plain of Jezreel. It lay in Jesus' time on one of the important trade routes from east to west. So the boy Jesus had ample opportunity to observe peoples of every race and condition.

2. *Mary's position.* Mary and Joseph were undoubtedly near of kin, both of royal lineage though living in circumstances humble and poor, while the usurper Herod sat upon the throne. She was of the tribe of Judah, though in some way, probably through her mother, related to the Levite, Elisabeth. Her betrothal to Joseph, which had occurred before the angelic annunciation, would have been a public ceremonial considered as binding as marriage itself, though the wedding might not take place until months later.

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3. *The angelic visitation.* It is interesting to contrast in detail the annunciation to Mary with that to Zacharias. The one occurred in the Temple. Zacharias was an old man, chosen by lot to perform, for the first and only time of his life, the honored office of burning the morning incense. He was rebuked for his unbelief and stricken deaf and dumb for nine months as a stern but gracious sign both to himself and to others. The angel's visit to Mary, on the other hand, came in the seclusion of her home. With her there seems to be not doubt, but only a great humility and a natural wonder; a puzzled, "How shall this be?" To it the angel significantly replies, "No word of God shall be void of power." When God commissions for the impossible he also enables; and with him all things are possible. Let us note the gentle dignity of the angel's explanation of the "how"; also that the sign vouchsafed to Mary—the conception of her kinswoman Elisabeth—is not like that to Zacharias, a punishment, but a gracious assurance. Mary utters those matchless words that have become a standard for all women of all time (ver. 38).

4. *Mary's song.* Here speaks, not the carpenter's betrothed of Nazareth, but

the daughter of King David. The majestic poetry of the "Magnificat" possesses the stately cadence of the Psalms. To the eyes of the world of her day, even to the eyes of her betrothed husband, Mary was destined to appear misunderstood and suspected. However, her purity and devotion do not flinch. She sees herself as did her inspired kinswoman, Elisabeth, the favored of Jehovah, the servant of God and of her race. Her song becomes the "antiphonal morning psalmody of the breaking Messianic day."

The Lesson Lived

Susanna G. Fisher

THE GENEVA DECLARATION

What manner of child shall this be? (Luke 1:66.)

The Geneva Declaration, as adopted by the League of Nations, concerning the rights of children, says:

1. The child should be given the means requisite for its normal development, both materially and spiritually.

2. The child that is hungry should be fed; the child that is sick should be nursed; the child that is backward should be helped; the delinquent child should be reclaimed; and the orphan and

the waif should be sheltered and succored.

3. The child should be the first to receive relief in times of distress.

4. The child should be put in a position to earn a livelihood and should be protected against every form of exploitation.

5. The child should be brought up in the consciousness that its talents should be devoted to the service of its fellow men.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CHILDHOOD

Many shall rejoice at his birth (Luke 1:14).

When God wants an important thing done in this world, or a wrong righted, he goes about it in a strange way. He doesn't release his thunderbolts or stir up his earthquakes. He simply has a tiny, helpless baby born, perhaps in a very obscure home, perhaps of a very humble mother. And he puts the idea or purpose into the mother's heart. And she puts it in the baby's mind, and then—God waits!

"The great events of this world," says one, "are not battles and earthquakes and hurricanes. The great events of this world are babies. They are earthquakes and hurricanes."—*Edward G. Sullivan.*

LESSON II. JANUARY 12. JESUS, THE HOPE OF ALL NATIONS

GENERAL THEME: A PROPHETIC VISION

Luke 2. (Verses printed, Luke 2: 25-35, 40)

[This lesson prepared by HERBERT WHITING VIRGIN, D. D., LL. D., Chicago, Ill.]

Devotional Reading for the Opening Service: Isaiah 49: 6-13

KEY VERSE: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples.—Luke 2: 30, 31

25 And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:

30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;

32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.

34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;

35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

40 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

A Bible Message for Every Day

Monday. The Promise to Simeon. Luke 2: 25-35. A student and believer in the promises, a heart trustful and obedient to the leadership of the Holy Spirit, receives his reward.

Tuesday. The Saviour Promised. Matt. 1: 18-25. How impressive is the evidence, as to the carefully chosen human agents,

who are to be the mediums of God's blessings to mankind. How fine, trustful, loyal, they are

Wednesday. A Happy Future Promised. Isa. 35: 1-10. Read this epic again and again. Let its rhythmic movement, like a glad morning lilt, grip you—and as it does, rejoice in the gracious promises.

Thursday. Everlasting Salvation. Isa. 51: 1-8. As we read this promise, we are

moved with gratitude for the redemption that has come to us—and the assurance of its permanency.

Friday. A New Day. Isa. 65: 17-25. It is enheartening in the extreme to know that in spite of distresses that baffle and startle, a day is coming when justice and peace shall reign.

Saturday. A New Heaven and a New Earth. Rev. 21: 1-7. This Scripture has been read and quoted a thousand and one times—to give strength, courage, and hope to saddened hearts.

Sunday. Righteousness and Peace. Isa. 11: 1-9. It is amazing to read promises in the Old Testament that reveal a spiritual insight in the New.

At the Threshold of the Lesson

But there shall come from heaven a wondrous Man,

Whose hands were stretched out on the fruitful wood,

The noblest of the Hebrews . . .

With admirable speech and hallowed lips

No longer vex thy soul, nor put a sword
Unto thy bosom, O thou child of God,
Rich, only, longed-for flower, thou goodly light,

Thou consummation noble, longed for pure!

—*Sibylline Oracles.*

*Look at that Holy Thing but a span-
ing, and already made a sacrifice for
us and for uncleanness not his own!
And as he began in the Temple, that day,
he continued every day to lead a life
of pain and shame and blood-shedding,
for us and for our children, till he fin-
ished on the cross, the sin-atonement work
his Father had given him to do.—Alex-
ander Whyte.*

*The love of an aged man for a child,
which is so touching, and which nature
itself inspires, carries with it the greatest
benefits.—Maurice Baries.*

A baby is a harmless thing,
And wins our hearts with one accord,
And Flower of Babies was their King,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

—Christina Rossetti.

The Lesson Before Us

I. INTRODUCTION

*Perhaps there is no more familiar por-
tion of the Scriptures than the account
of the birth and childhood of Jesus—un-
less it is the fourteenth chapter of John.
There is given in simple narrative the
account of a world event that has revo-
lutionized human society. Of the ac-
curacy of the narrative there can be no
doubt, though practically all the historical
statements, about the decree of Augustus
Cæsar, the census, the time of the gov-
ernorship of Quirinius, etc., were ques-
tioned by scholars until more careful his-
torical research, by men like Ramsey,
revealed the absolute trustworthiness of
Luke.*

*No more wonderful event, or more
glorious promises for a groping and sin-
ful world, could have been heralded;
and it was to be expected that this nar-
rative has engraved itself deep on the
universal heart of men.*

*The shepherds hear: "Be not afraid,
for behold, I bring you good tidings of
great joy, which shall be for all the
people." The burst of song that came
from the heavenly throng confirmed the
declaration. Then with haste, these shep-
herds confirm the annunciation.*

*The narrative goes on, with rhythmic
movement, from one event to another,
from the naming of the child, the puri-
fication of the mother, the going to the
temple to present him to the Lord, and
the offering of the sacrifice, "as com-
manded in the law of the Lord."*

II. SIMEON. Ver. 25-28

1. *The man*—"And behold . . . Simeon
. . . righteous and devout." The name
Simeon was common among the Jews.
The tradition, curiously confirmed by the
Talmud, is to the effect that this Simeon
was the son of the famous Hillel, and the
brother of Gamaliel. It is possible. In
any event, here is one who living a
righteous life, and seeking to articulate
his life with the will of God, so finds
himself in tune with the infinite, that a
yearning desire of his heart is to be satis-
fied.

"Looking for the consolation of Israel."

There seemed to be a general idea among
devout Jews that the coming of the
Messiah would not be long delayed.
Joseph of Arimathea is especially men-
tioned as one who "waited for the king-
dom of God" (Mark 15:43). Dean
Farrar refers to the common Jewish
prayer-formula in use: "May I see the
consolation of Israel."

2. *Under the Spirit's leadership.* "The
Holy Spirit was upon him." "It was
revealed . . . by the Spirit." "He came
in the Spirit into the Temple." It is
strikingly noticeable that three times in
succession reference is made to the Holy
Spirit's part in the fulfilment of Simeon's
devout wish.

He yielded himself so fully to the guid-
ance of the Spirit, that time and place
were definitely fixed in his mind, and
thus, when he went ahead to the Temple,
he went with a certainty of expectation.
Moreover, it was revealed exactly who
this being was to be: "The Lord's
Christ," "The Lord's Anointed," a desig-
nation of the Messiah in Psalm 2:2 (cf.
Acts 4:26). The Lord's Christ was the
paraklesin of verse 25, a Greek word used
to express Messianic hope.

"When the parents brought in the child
Jesus . . . he received him into his arms."
Simeon had gone on into the Temple,
waiting. Shortly there came into the
Temple a peasant couple, simply and
poorly clad. The woman bore in her
arms a child. Without hesitation, this
aged servant of God takes the child in
his arms, and quickly blesses God for his
fulfilment of a sacred promise.

III. "LONGS FOR HOME." Ver. 29

"Now lettest thou thy servant depart,
Lord, according to thy word, in peace."
Simeon regards himself as a slave, sub-
ject to his Master. He here states that
the position of trust to which he was
assigned he has fulfilled. He now begs
to be relieved of his post. This is his
beautiful way of asking that he "may
depart and be with God, which is far
better."

IV. "THE MESSIAH OF ALL NATIONS" Ver. 30-33

"Salvation . . . of all peoples . . . a
revelation to the Gentiles." Simeon's
song is the broader view-point held by
the older prophets, but practically repudi-
ated by the narrow view-point of the Jew
of Christ's day. Christ's first disciples
found it difficult to grasp the univer-
sality of the kingdom of God. Read
Isaiah 52:10, for an older view, and the
tenth chapter of Acts, for the narrow
view of the first disciples.

V. REACTIONS. Ver. 33-35

1. *"His father and his mother were
marveling."* Here is employed the lan-
guage of ordinary custom. The late
manuscripts wrongly read, "and Joseph,"
instead of "his father." "Marveling"
—how human that is! Though having
heard similar things from even greater

witnesses, they nevertheless, with par-
ental pride and joy, delight to have that
which astonishes and pleases said again.

2. *"Is set for the falling and rising up
of many in Israel."* He will be a stum-
bling-block and an offense to some (Isa.
8:14; Matt. 21:42, 44). He will bring
joy and gladness (rising up) to others
(Rom. 6:4, 9; Eph. 2:6). Judas de-
spairs, Peter repents; one robber blas-
phemes, the other confesses.

3. *"Yea, and a sword shall pierce
through thine own soul; that thoughts
out of many hearts may be revealed."*
It should not be difficult for us to grasp
the significance of this figure. From the
beginning Mary must have realized that
there was dark mystery connected with
the coming of the Lord's Christ. Cer-
tainly, as the years slipped by, and grow-
ing jealousy, hatred and unbelief arose
on all sides—and then the cross—Mary
knew the significance of this dark proph-
ecy; as poignant sorrow clouded her
life.

VI. GROWTH OF THE CHILD. Ver. 40

*"And the child grew and waxed strong,
filled with wisdom: and the grace of God
was upon him."* Both Luke and Paul
represent that the boy was a normal
individual; learning as others learned;
in fine, subject to ordinary growth and
development, in human knowledge. Rob-
ertson, in his *Word Pictures*, says,
"filled with wisdom," showing that the
process of filling with wisdom kept pace
with the bodily growth. The intellectual,
moral, and spiritual growth of the child,
like the physical, was real.

Practical Questions for Class Discussion

- ¶ Do you know anyone about whom it
can be said, "He is righteous and
devout"?
- ¶ Are our present type of preaching, and
atmosphere of worship, calculated to
cultivate deep piety in the member-
ship of the churches?
- ¶ Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?
Have you heard many sermons, or
any, upon the Holy Spirit?
- ¶ Do you believe the Holy Spirit leads
today, as he led Simeon? What
must we do in order that the Spirit
may lead us?
- ¶ Do you believe in God's promises to
his children? Are there any condi-
tions attached to the fulfilment of
promises?
- ¶ Can you face the prospect of death as
Simeon did? Do you think of death
as a "departing," like a vessel "cast-
ing off" from dock, to go on a
delightful adventure—or, let us say,
to turn toward home?
- ¶ Are we narrower than the Scriptures
in our belief in the power of the
gospel to redeem society?
- ¶ Is it possible for a child of today to
grow as perfectly as did the boy
Jesus?

TEACHERS' HELPS

In the Men's Class

Charles C. Stillman, Columbus, Ohio

Prophecy tethers future events of supreme importance to the knowledge of the day. Imagination lets loose a flock of possible and impossible events to fly at random in the fields of the days to come. Vision lies between prophecy and imagination: it possesses the hope but lacks the certainty of the former, and has a discipline that is entirely lacking in the latter.

The power to feel, to hope, to want, to ask, to fashion things, to make programs, to struggle, to throb and to thrill, to encompass great achievements with the mind and heart—this is what makes a man or a people. "Where there is no vision the people perish."

A sermon I remember contained a play on words: "The Christian is never dissatisfied but always unsatisfied." Sensibility is in proportion to delicacy of appreciation. If you don't want anything worth having, it is quite likely you will not get it. Life is a reach for adjustments. The fellow who sees worth-while things and goes after them in a worth-while way has a ninety per cent. break toward accomplishment. What would you think of a philosophy like this:

Be just as lazy as your circumstances will allow. Never do today what you can put off till tomorrow. Take what comes and be satisfied. Keep your sensibilities as dull as possible. Why look ahead, for if you do you will suffer?

What did Jesus mean when he said: "Be not anxious for the things of the morrow?" Are ambition and faith irreconcilable?

A friend of mine writes me at least once a year about a movement sponsored by him and known as "The Fellowship of Faiths." Under his plan religions, philosophies, races and nationalities all unite in harmonious demonstrations, with dramatic setting, in order to reveal the values inherent in varying cultures. Does this line up well with the recorded vision of Simeon?

"Now, Master, you will let your slave go free

In peace, as you promised,

For my eyes have seen your salvation
Which you have set before all the nations,

A light of revelation for the heathen,
And a glory to your people Israel!"

—Goodspeed.

If Nazi Germany accomplishes its "purge" by the social and commercial humiliation of Jews, will the nation be happy and successful? Herr Hitler appointed a new head of the church early in October, 1935. Does anyone say that

religious unity can be accomplished by such a technique?

The League of Nations constitutes a vision of peace and harmony,—we hope. Can differing religions be brought together in harmonious, political and economic programs? Will the disagreements inherent among followers of the Christ frustrate the vision of Simeon?

"That fundamental inquiry touching the estimate to be placed upon the person of Christ has furnished a battlefield across which the troops of proof-texts and of logic, of daring speculation and of plodding common sense, have advanced and retreated with all the honors or dishonors of theological war."—(Brown, *Why I Believe in Religion*.)

Before My Class of Women

Olive Woodward Ogg, Monroe, Iowa

The second chapter of Luke records four events, each so outstanding that we must note them all, briefly—if we are training our class to be able to think through the book. They are, the birth of our Lord; the annunciation to and visit of the shepherds; the presentation of the child in the Temple; and his visit to Jerusalem at the age of twelve. The incident chosen for our special consideration is the one of the four perhaps least often emphasized; yet it affords a most fruitful study—dramatic, divinely coincidental, and significantly prophetic. We may well look at the presentation in the Temple from these three angles.

1. *A dramatic situation.* It has often been remarked that with every humble or humiliating situation in the earthly career of the Christ there was an accompaniment of heavenly radiance. Cradled in a manger, yet was he heralded by angels; born to poor and humble parents, he received from the Magi royal gifts; hungry and devil-beset in the wilderness, he is attended by ministering angels; coming up from the lowly baptismal waters, he is hailed by a voice from the glory; his enemies seek to cast him from the brow of a hill, he passes in regal dignity through their very midst; he is nailed to a cross, but heaven frowns in unnatural gloom and earth is rent with earthquake shock.

So his humble humanity and his divinity both stand revealed in the incident of the lesson. His parents at his presentation must bring the offering of the poor, a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons; but even as they are doing it, two of God's favored messengers greet them and bear witness to the greatness of the child.

2. *The divine coincidence.* There is nothing fortuitous about the circumstances attending decisive moments in the lives of God's chosen. The meeting

of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch was timed to a nicety by the chronometer of heaven. Simeon had waited many weary years to behold the fulfilment of the promise which God had whispered to his yearning heart. He will not miss now. Note, however, that both Philip and Simeon had an ear trained to hear the voice of the Spirit and a will submissive to the Spirit's bidding. Simeon's four qualifications for the honor are stated, each of mighty significance. He was (1), righteous; (2), devout; (3), looking for the hope of Israel; (4), Spirit-filled. With such anointing, follows naturally that his aged arms were waiting to receive to his bosom the infant Saviour, his full heart ready to pour out the music of the "Nun Dimittis."

Equally timely—"heaven-timed"—the visit "at that very hour" of the prophetess Anna. All the long years of her consecrated widowhood, with their daily and nightly worship, fasting, and supplication, had led patiently and steadfastly toward this moment of sacred consummation.

3. *The prophetic significance.* Simeon's Spirit-illuminated gaze sees in the holy child, what many of his disciples later were slow to recognize, the hope and glory of Israel, a light for revelation to the Gentiles—for the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him (Ps. 25:14). Then, as he places the child again in the mother's arms, Simeon utters that dark saying which Mary must have pondered deep in her silent heart for more than thirty years. Simeon had declared, like Isaiah at another period of Israel's apostasy, "I will wait for the Lord, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob" (Isa. 8:17). Because of that pledge he now seems to see, as in prophetic panorama, the earthly life of the Christ. "It was to be a stone of decision; a foundation and corner-stone, for fall or for uprising; sign spoken against; the sword of deep personal sorrow would pierce the mother's heart; and so to the terrible end, when the veil of externalism which had so long covered the hearts of Israel's leaders would be rent, and the deep evil of their hearts laid bare" (Edersheim).

Anna, too, looks upon this tiny infant with the clear eye of faith. It is significant that Anna's tribe, the tribe of Asher, was still in hopeless exile. To her, then, the Messiah means not only "consolation" but "redemption." Her devout soul seems to have sought of like-minded watchers, and to them she now bears the glad testimony that the one whom they have so longed for has come at last (ver. 38).

Are we women of today fit to be numbered in that faithful fellowship with Mary, Elisabeth and Anna?—departing not from the sanctuary, looking for the blessed hope (Titus 2:13), speaking of him to other hearts that long for him

ming, submissive even to the sword trust in our own souls if need be? Only let us ever say, "Behold the hand-aid of the Lord!"

The Lesson Lived

Susanna G. Fisher

FROM SMALL BEGINNINGS

And the grace of God was upon him (Luke 2:40).

When Count Zinzendorf was a boy at school, he founded among his school-fellows a little guild, which he called the "Order of the Grain of Mustard-seed," and thereafter that seedling grew to a great tree of the Moravian brotherhood, whose boughs were a blessing to the world. When they laughed at Saint Theresa when she wanted to build a great orphanage and had but three shillings to begin with,

she answered: "With three shillings Theresa can do nothing; but with God and her three shillings there is nothing which Theresa cannot do." Do not let us imagine, then, that we are too poor, or too stupid, or too ignorant, or too obscure to do any real good in the world wherein God has placed us.—*Farrar*.

THE LESSON OF OBEDIENCE

And he . . . was subject unto them (Luke 2:51).

The mother of Jesus taught him to obey. The record says that he "came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them." He remembered the fifth commandment. He would have approved Paul's admonition, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right." A teacher of forty-five years' experience in the public schools of a great city was asked to state the most conspicuous lack

in the children she taught daily through the years. She replied: "They have not been taught to mind. They do not know what it means to obey." Jesus learned it in the old Jewish home. He learned it in later life "by the things which he suffered." We all have to learn it. It is better to learn it in youth. In the minds of some the newer secular education seems to stand for freedom in which obedience has little part. We are told that there must be no inhibition of freedom, but the fullest opportunity for self-expression. It sounds well and it may be well, provided there are some other things put in to preserve the balance. Obedience is a law of God which men alter or avoid at their peril. Every child has lost much who has not learned what Jesus learned in his simple home, namely, subjection to rightful authority.—*Earnest Worker*.

LESSON III. JANUARY 19. FINDING GOD'S WAY FOR LIFE

Luke 3: 1 to 4: 15. (Verses printed, Luke 3: 21, 22; 4: 1-13)

GENERAL THEME: JESUS PREPARES FOR HIS WORK

Prepared by MITCHELL BRONK, D. D.

Devotional Reading for the Opening Service: Hebrews 2: 10-18

KEY VERSE: Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.—Luke 4: 8

3: 21 Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened.

22 And the Holy Ghost descended in bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

4: 1 And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

2 Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered.

3 And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.

4 And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

5 And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

6 And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.

7 If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.

8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

9 And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence:

10 For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee:

11 And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

12 And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

13 And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

Friday. A Prophet's Preparation. Isa. 6: 1-8. (1) He was in the Lord's house; (2) he was humble; (3) he made confession; (4) he submitted to the purification of fire.

Saturday. A Young Man's Preparation. Ps. 119: 9-16. "According to thy word"—"Thy word have I hid in mine heart." What a fine, and safe curriculum!

Sunday. Conquerors Through Christ. Rom. 8: 31-39. Notice the things catalogued here in which we are to be conquerors. But Christ Jesus won out against them, too. And it is glorious to participate in his victory.

At the Threshold of the Lesson

Neither the General Theme nor the Adult Topic is very applicable to this lesson. The baptism, indeed, did finally prepare Jesus for his career, but it was ordination, the end of the preparation. In the temptation he did not find the Father's way of life for him—he already knew it—but that way became clearer and plainer, and he decisively adjured all byways.

In the days of chivalry the last step in the training for knighthood was for the young squire to spend a vigil night in some church, watching all through the hours his arms that had been placed on the high altar. If we may think of the boy Jesus as a "page," and the young carpenter of Nazareth as a "squire," then this wilderness temptation may be represented as his vigil; out of it he goes forth with complete investiture, a perfect Knight of God, Galahad of God's Round Table.

A Bible Message for Every Day

Monday. Jesus Baptized. Luke 3: 21, 22. It is sometimes asked, Why was he baptized? Because he knew that it would be a means of grace for his followers, for all time; and such things he would share—and by example—with them.

Tuesday. Jesus Tempted. Luke 4: 1-13. There is no excuse or apology here for you in your temptations—but that you may know that the One who "strengtheneth" you appreciates the

strain that is upon you and the kind of help you need.

Wednesday. A Leader's Preparation. Exod. 3: 1-10. Prayer is especially the item of such preparation that this Scripture indicates. For prayer is our "mountain of God," the Horeb, where we go to meet him.

Thursday. A Ruler's Preparation. 2 Kings 3: 4-14. It is ever a good question to ask, for a ruler or anyone: "Is there not here a prophet of the Lord?"—a good Christian minister, say?

The Lesson Before Us

I. THE BAPTISM AND THE TEMPTATION

All three synoptic Gospels place the temptation immediately following the baptism. In baptism Jesus committed himself to his divine mission. The voice from on high sanctioned it, and accredited his peculiar relation to God the Father, his Sonship. But he must become clear as to the program of the new spiritual Kingdom that he will inaugurate. He realizes that it is to be altogether otherwise than the people were expecting. Accordingly, he must gain a clear-cut, hardened conviction that he can and will go through to the end with this task and office—and cross; putting aside the cup of material comfort, and worldly honor and glory, and laudable national pride and interest. "My son, if thou art coming near to serve the Lord, prepare thy soul for temptation" (Ecclus. 2:1).

II. THE BAPTISM. 3:21, 22; parallels: Matt. 33:13-17; Mark 1:9-11

Jesus recognizes John's mission as not only a preparation for, but also an appropriate beginning of his own. By joining it he definitely commits himself to his own cause, so to speak. Baptism thus becomes to us his followers a holy thing because it inaugurated him into his ministry—as it may be thought of as consecrating us to his service, when we are baptized.

That our sinless Lord should submit to a "baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" (3:3) need not trouble us. It was our sins. "He went down into the water and shared in the baptism of publicans and sinners . . . we must see in it an anticipation of Calvary" (J. D. Jones). "It is a symbol of social solidarity and of submission to the will of God" (A. Bruce Curry).

The representation of the Spirit by a dove-like semblance is appropriate. Among the Samaritans the dove stood for the glory of God. It is universally a symbol of gentleness. Here the Father looks tenderly upon the Son, who sets forth upon the way of His good pleasure. Attention has often been called to the fact that all three personalities of the Trinity participate in this holy event.

III. THE TEMPTATION. 4:1-13

Luke has taken over Matthew's narrative (Matt. 4:1-11). He transposes the second and third temptations of Matthew's order, otherwise their accounts are practically the same. Mark has only a brief passing mention of the temptation (Mark 1:12, 13). He uses the word Satan where the others have devil, and has the added, "he was with the wild beasts."

We are compelled to think that the report of the temptation given in the Gospels came from Christ's own lips; like this: In one of his intimate conversations with the Twelve—to fortify them out of his own experience, and example,

and that they might know the principles that were to be followed in the Kingdom's upbuilding, he tells them about it.

The place. Tradition points to a wild rocky hill, or mountain, called Quarantania ("forty days") a few miles west of Jericho. It will thus have been near the scene of his baptism. A forty-day period seems ever to have been associated in the Jewish mind with seclusion, revelation and peril (Exod. 34:18; 1 Kings 19:8; Num. 14:34). Aside from the temptation, we are to think of our Lord here as following "an inner impulse, wrought by the Spirit" (Broadus) to go off alone to work out the problem of his destiny.

There will always be a difference of opinion as to the precise nature of the three temptations. Some will take them to have been actually, literally real; others as "symbolical descriptions of a mysterious inward struggle." Our Lord will have made as clear as human language would permit his awful, mysterious experience. John A. Broadus says: "The subject, from its nature, calls for guarded interpretation, great moderation in conjectures, and willingness to remain ignorant when we have no means of knowing."

IV. THE APPEAL TO APPETITE. Ver. 3, 4

Literally it was a matter of bare physical hunger, for Jesus was famished; and he could satisfy that hunger, if he would—by using the divine power that had been bestowed upon him for a higher purpose, and by making an exhibition of himself. In its application to us there would be included any of the "fleshly lusts," good, bad and indifferent, the satisfying of which demands the sacrifice of one's better self, of one's principles and righteous character.

Many an enjoyment can be enjoyed only by following the devil's suggestions. The dull monotony of life and the burden of the bounden task may be transformed into a "good time," but, says Jesus, a man shall not live for a good time alone; God has other words for life's support or fulfillment than comfort and pleasure (ver. 4).

More specifically this temptation must have been an appeal to Jesus to make a new social an economic order the outstanding thing in his Kingdom's program. He says to himself, No! however important that may be, and sadly needed; however gladly I shall relieve hunger, poverty and bodily pain, I will not let myself become a mere social reformer, or "ecclesiastical errand-boy." The Father destined me for other and more important tasks, and I must speak his whole message (Matt. 4:4, "every word").

V. THE APPEAL OF EARTHLY POWER AND GLORY. Ver. 5-8

Jesus did not at this time fully sense his complete Godsonship; otherwise no temptation would have been involved.

"He (Satan) was offering to One who had lived as the Village Carpenter the throne of the world" (Farrar). But he knew himself competent to use his promised royalty for the blessing of his fellows, especially his oppressed nation.

It was the same temptation that repeatedly assailed him, to assume the temporal Messiahship because of Israel's desperate need. To put away the power to do good requires heroic moral bravery; but Jesus did that for the sake of the higher good he had in mind; the world's spiritual deliverance and rule.

VI. THE APPEAL TO SPIRITUAL PRIDE. Ver. 9-12

Literally, to the spectacular; to gain a big following; crowds; to advertise oneself. This temptation is particularly insidious, because spiritual pride is apparently so justifiable and oftentimes so becomes the Christian. Jesus had the consciousness that he was God's Son—why should he not give the world the sort of evidence that would most impress the world? Or make proof of it for his own personal assurance and satisfaction?

Does not the end justify the means? the devil hints. It is aggravating to have one's faith challenged, by man or devil. Jesus answers, in effect: I will prove my relationship to the Father in another and better way than by a sensational wonder—I will be no "show-off"—by submitting to my Father's will; by the worthier wonder of the cross I will prove it.

VII. JESUS' METHOD WITH TEMPTATION

The Holy-Spirit-reinforced word of God is mentioned in Ephesians 6:17 as the best weapon of offense or attack in the Christian's accoutrement. In fighting off the devil-tempter our Lord uses here that selfsame weapon. This is a lesson to his followers in their times of temptation. We do not believe, as men used to, that verses of the Bible have a magical virtue, are to be employed as amulets and charms; but they certainly possess wonderful spiritual virtue; and with them we can overcome the Evil One a great deal better than with any words of our own. Notice that our Lord does not dally with the devil, nor argue with him; just these short, pertinent bits of Scripture; and then is silent.

The closing words of the account, "departed from him for a season" ("till another time," Goodspeed), remind us that other temptations came to Jesus; in Gethsemane even (cf. Mark 8:32, 33; Luke 23:35). But this decisive resistance had settled matters once for all. When the devil leaves any of us it is usually "for a season." But resistance scares him off. And the first resistance is what tells: "Each victory will help you some other to win."

VIII. OURSELVES AND TEMPTATION

We cannot avoid it. God's full approval and the endowment of the Holy Spirit do not save us from it (3:22 and 4:1).

Satan has a good fair show at us, as he did at Job. There is the oft-repeated saying of Martin Luther's, "You can't prevent the birds from flying over your head" (he added, "you can prevent them from building their nests in your hair!").

Jesus' wilderness temptation is typical; full of lessons for us. There is scarcely a temptation to which men are liable that does not find here its reflection. Hebrews 4:14-16 might be regarded as an analysis:

1. Jesus thus learned more thoroughly to sympathize with us in our temptations.
2. By overcoming he gained the power to succor us when we are tempted.

"Still, he who felt temptation's power
Will guard me in that dangerous hour."

3. We have the example of his experience and victory, to profit by.

"We cannot make ourselves like Jesus Christ, but we can 'be made like unto him,' as the Spirit of God takes hold of us—if we are willing humbly to go to school with him, to bring our lives to the test of his standards, and submit ourselves to his influence" (Barry).

Practical Questions for Class Discussion

- ¶ Mention several features of baptism, as practised by Baptists, that make it a valuable preparation for Christian living.

¶ As you look back upon your own baptism, how has it affected, influenced, helped you as a Christian?

¶ Is it not strange that after the assurance of the Voice, at his baptism, the experience of the temptation should have been necessary?

¶ Does the man who has had many temptations to overcome—and has done it—necessarily make a better Christian than the one who has been more sheltered from sinful appeals?

¶ Illustrate each of the three temptations by prizes that men in our day win by "selling out to the devil."

¶ Consider that in Christ there is strength to endure and overcome temptation, rather than escape from it. Then the Lord's Prayer would mean, "Lead us not into (the fulfilment of) temptation"—"deliver us from the evil" (of it, that is, of temptation).

¶ Much is said nowadays about the desirability of vocational guidance for young people. How may the church and church school play a part in such guidance? Might we not stress the need of much prayer therein, going to God for counsel, as well as to human advisers?

¶ What light does James' word about temptation (James 1:12-15) throw on the temptation of Jesus? What about James' statement in verse 13?

the Baptist; the baptism of Jesus; and the wilderness temptation, followed as it was by the angelic ministrations.

We must pass rapidly, as does Luke, over the ministry of John, but we should not fail to note the important connection between the passage from Isaiah 40 which Luke quotes, with its "levelling" and "straightening" and John's answer to the question of the multitudes, "What then must we do?"

Mark the levelling process of true repentance, as indicated in Luke 3:11, 13. Little difference would there be if John stood preaching in our marketplace. Would we might hear his voice today! Have the men of our time any greater need than to repent?

As our Lord's preparation for taking up his public ministry, Luke relates first, his baptism, secondly, the testing in the wilderness. Let us see how each was essential to what was to follow.

1. *The baptism a preparatory fulfilment.* The significant words of Jesus recorded in Matthew 3:15 should be included in any study of his baptism. Simple as they are, it is difficult to feel that we have sounded their full depth. Yet they convinced John. We stumble as did John at thought of the Sinless One submitting to the rite. Two sayings of his should forever silence our question. The first is in Matthew 3:15: It became him to "fulfil all righteousness." The statement parallels that in Luke 2:51, that Jesus returned from the revelation experienced during his visit to Jerusalem and was subject to his earthly parents. In perfect acceptance of the demands of his incarnation he yields obedience at every point. The second saying is a question addressed to his enemies, in Matthew 21:25, "The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men?" Granted that it was from heaven, to his perfect humanity it becomes at once a part of his Father's business. Both in his visit to Jerusalem in his thirteenth year and in his submission to John's baptism we see clear evidence of the completeness of his self-emptying, producing a consequent gradual recognition of his mission. His baptism has been characterized as the last act of his private life. The voice from heaven becomes the inauguration of his public ministry.

2. *The temptation a preparatory testing.* There is this marked difference between the baptism and the wilderness trial. The first was by his own premeditated choice, the second by the constraining power of the Spirit. Mark, with characteristic vividness, says, "The Spirit driveth him forth." The first Adam had been tempted and had fallen; to become a quickening spirit the second Adam must survive a similar test. But the first had met his temptation amid that very fulness of life which he had been warned would be forfeit if he disobeyed. Christ met his testing alone in a barren wilderness, weakened by fast-

TEACHERS' HELPS

In the Men's Class

Charles C. Stillman, Columbus, Ohio

In Emil Ludwig's book *The Son of Man* there is a very significant statement about the boyhood of Jesus. The statement is naively presented, within a brace of parentheses, and it is as follows: "The lad notices (for he notices everything that may help to unlock the mystery of the human heart) that some. . ." No one will deny that Jesus habitually noticed everything that helped "to unlock the mystery of the human heart." There readily occurs to us Pope's much-quoted aphorism about the proper study of mankind being man. If we want to serve men we must understand men.

Though the profit motive is doubtless the predominating factor in business, there is generally present—varying with the idealism of business participants—a desire to be of genuine service to customers in commerce, or to users of fabricated articles in trade. A merchant in the United States will study the habits and desires of a country of South America before trying to float sales of his products there—he will if he is wise! In representative government the officeholder will consider his constituency and try to appreciate their needs and desires.

A teacher's success consists in his ability to get himself *en rapport* with his students. A minister must study and understand his congregation if he is to serve their highest interests. The best preparation for life is to learn to notice those things that help unlock the mystery of the human heart.

The essence of Jesus' experience in the desert, viewed as a preparation for his mission, seems to me to lie in that mental struggle that inevitably precedes a momentous decision. The temptations were inescapably real to him. Being of unimpeachable integrity, he could not shut his eyes to the implications of the dedication he saw in front of him. He fought them through.

Blessed is the man who can visualize a life program; twice blessed is he who can with unshrinking honesty wrestle beforehand with the confronting difficulties; thrice blessed he who forges on through to successful accomplishment, having glorified decision by action.

Before My Class of Women

Olive Woodward Ogg, Monroe, Iowa

Three steps are to be discerned in the Scripture passage indicated for our study, each preparatory to our Lord's earthly ministry: the ministry of John

ing, beset by wild beasts. Note how the three choices he makes in the final onslaught were preparatory to the establishing of a kingdom not of this world.

First, he hungers after his long fast. Satan says, "Use your divine power to make of these stones bread." An example of the difference between the divine miracles already made familiar in the Old Testament and mere heathen magic which involved no moral purpose. Study the entire verse, Deuteronomy 8:3, from which Jesus quoted. It is one of the most richly suggestive in that wonderful book. Israel had rebelled and murmured—Jesus submits.

And now the world in all its glory lies unveiled before his eyes, fair in the morning sun, Satan its master. One little act of homage and "to thee will I give it all!" Compromise the short cut to glory and conquest. How many a brilliant leader has fallen prey to the suggestion. Christ chooses the way of the cross, the long, safe road we must all take if we would come to glory. Behold him now, seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Says Dr. A. T. Pierson, "Self-denial is not so much an impoverishment as a postponement."

The Spirit had led Christ into the

wilderness; Satan now leads him into the city, to a pinnacle of the Temple. "Cast thyself down. Make a spectacular descent into the throng, announcing the very sort of a Messiah the many are expecting." Our Lord rejects presumption, choosing rather simple trust and obedience to the Spirit's leading.

The baptism and the temptation of our Lord present a standard and a glorious hope. Of the one it is enough to say,

It is the way the Master went,
Should not the servant tread it still?

That glorious victory won in the wilderness, followed by peace and the ministry of angels, satisfies our deepest longings. Where man failed, man has now triumphed. His victory assures our own (Heb. 4:14-16).

The Lesson Lived

Susanna G. Fisher

SATAN'S CHOICE OF A LOCALITY

Being forty days tempted of the devil
(Luke 4:2).

We are apt to think that Satan is most powerful in crowded thoroughfares. It is a mistake. I believe the temptations of life are always most dan-

gerous in the wilderness. I have been struck with that fact in Bible history. It is not in their most public moments that the great men of the past have fallen; it has been in their quiet hours. Moses never stumbled when he stood before Pharaoh; it was when he got into the desert that his patience began to fail. David never stumbled when he was fighting his way through opposing armies; it was when the fight was over, when he was resting quietly under his own vine, that he became a murderer and an adulterer. The sorest temptations are not those spoken, but those echoed. It is easier to lay aside your besetting sin amid a cloud of witnesses than in the solitude of your own room. The sin that besets you is never so beseeching as when you are alone. You may say kind things in public to the man you hate, but you make up for it in the wilderness. It is our *thoughts* that hurt us; and we think most in solitude. Many a man who resists the temptation to drink at the dinner table is conquered at the secret hour. Paul says that the Christian armor is most needed after we have vanquished the outward foe, that we may "be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."—George Matheson, in "Times of Retirement."

LESSON IV. JANUARY 26. WHAT JESUS CAME TO DO

Luke 4:16-44. (Verses printed, Luke 4:16-30)

GENERAL THEME: JESUS DECLARES HIS PURPOSE

Prepared by MITCHELL BRONK, D. D.

Devotional Reading for the Opening Service: Isaiah 61:1-3, 10, 11

KEY VERSES: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.—Luke 4:18, 19

16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

20 And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

22 And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?

23 And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.

24 And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.

25 But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

26 But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.

27 And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

28 And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

29 And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.

30 But he passing through the midst of them went his way.

A Bible Message for Every Day

Monday. A Scriptural Ministry. Luke 4:16-21. From Jesus' example and experience here—there will be the presence in that ministry of the Holy Spirit, and it will center around a place of worship and the word of God.

Tuesday. A Faithful Preacher. Luke 4:22-30. The opinion of men isn't what counts most, nevertheless a good, faithful minister should expect to be "well spoken of."

Wednesday. The Way of Life. Mark 12:28-34. Your "Do" and "Don't" will be of little avail unless they can presuppose belief in God and a mastering love for him.

Thursday. What Jesus Came to Do. John 5:30-38. The will of God. And how splendidly, utterly, he did it! For us it's a big undertaking even a little to do it—but then we have his help.

Friday. A Life-Purpose. Phil 1:12-21. When our life-purpose is, like Paul's, to "magnify" Christ (ver. 20), then all that happens to us seems to fit beneficently into it (ver. 12).

Saturday. A Life-Investment. Luke 18:18-30. We hear much nowadays of how badly investments, of stocks, bonds and real estate, have turned out. But no

one is complaining of the failure or depreciation of his spiritual, heavenly, securities.

Sunday. The Spirit of Christ. Isa. 61: 1-3, 10, 11. This chapter opens with a prophecy of rich, blessed service, and closes with a prophecy of great joy in that service. And that was Christ.

At the Threshold of the Lesson

"Men are the only means God's Spirit has of accomplishing his purpose. What men? You. Is it worth doing, or is it not? What do you do all day? What is your personal stake in the coming of the kingdom of Christ on earth?"—Henry Drummond.

"Text and sermon are most characteristic of Christ's whole ministry. No better motto could be found for that ministry than the prophetic oracle read in the synagogue of Nazareth."—A. B. Bruce.

"The program includes a saved man, a saved society, a saved world. . . He meant to save a man—that is personal. He meant to save a town—that is social. He meant to save the world. That is missionary. The plan enlarges until it stirs our hearts. . . I can hardly read it or think of it now without wanting to get outdoors, to shout for sheer joy that such a chance exists in the world."—W. F. McDowell.

"To work with Christ's program and ignore Christ is to utilize the sun's light without its energy."—Henry Drummond.

"The breach between the parochialism of his own people and the universalism of the Kingdom, proclaimed by John and realized in Jesus, becomes complete in (this) chapter 4."—The Abingdon Commentary.

The Lesson Before Us

I. THE SCRIPTURE BEFORE US Luke 4: 16-30

This passage is peculiar to Luke. Fragmentary parallels or doublets are Matthew 13: 53-58 and Mark 6: 1-6.

Synagogues had sprung up since the return from Exile; and not only in Palestine but wherever there were Jews. They were simply meeting-houses, without the dignity of the Temple or even that of a modern Jewish synagogue. The Hebrew word synagogue means, "house of assembly." The women sat apart from the men, and the "ruler" and elders had seats of prominence (Mark 12: 39).

There was no recognized, ordained, ministry. The president ("ruler") of the congregation would invite anyone known to be competent to read and expound the Scripture (Acts 13: 15). Prayers had already been offered and someone else had evidently read the First Lesson, which was always from the Pentateuch. Then the Isaiah roll was handed to Jesus, for the Second Lesson. "Opened" (ver. 17) and "closed the

book" (ver. 20) should be, "unrolled," "rolled up"—the papyrus or parchment-roll, containing Isaiah.

The reading may have been from a Targum (Aramaic translation of the Old Testament), or—and more likely—in Hebrew with an accompanying rendering into Aramaic by another person, the *meturgeman*, "translator." Hebrew had by this time become practically a dead language to the Jews. The passage from Isaiah (61: 1, 2) as given here (ver. 18) is seen to differ slightly from our text of the prophet. Luke has used the Septuagint (Greek translation), quoting freely, perhaps from memory, and possibly with reminiscences of Isaiah 43: 7 and 58: 6.

The Latin forms of the names in verses 17, 26, and 27, *Esaias, Elias, Eliseus*, have been taken over from the Vulgate, the Latin translation of the Bible; for Latin was largely used in the English church life of three hundred years ago. The names have properly been Anglicized in the Revised versions.

Instead of "recovering of sight to the blind," the Hebrew Bible has "the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Modern translations have "year of the Lord's favor," in verse 19. The primary reference is to the Year of Jubilee. In Hebrew the meaning is, "year of salvation" (Lev. 25: 8-10); but here the Messianic time, the true Jubilee of Christ's kingdom. It will be noticed that the further, "and the day of vengeance of our God," of Isaiah is not given. Did Jesus stop short here? Or has it been omitted in the record? It has been noticed that verses 18, 19, may be summed up in the four words, comfort, liberty, joy, beauty.

It will be assumed that the evangelist gives here only a part, only the gist, of what Jesus said. Yet he clearly announces that he is the long-expected Anointed One, and that the Messianic age has arrived, for the verb "is fulfilled" in verse 21 is in the perfect tense.

"Gracious words" (ver. 22) is better than the R. V. "words of grace." They are charmed by his manner of speaking (cf. John 7: 46; Col. 4: 6). What follows shows that what he said little appealed to them. Then they begin to wonder how it is that he, a mechanic of their town, lacking the education of a scribe, can venture to take such liberty with that Messianic passage from Isaiah.

The words in verse 23 presuppose that the people had been talking or asking him about his healing miracles over in Capernaum, of which they had heard. In quoting to them the common proverb, "Physician, heal thyself!" Jesus identifies himself with his home town. The sense then is—they say, "you are not performing any miracles, are not healing the sick, here in Nazareth. Why not? Doesn't charity begin at home?" His answer conveys the unvarnished truth that Nazareth hasn't enough respect for him and not the requisite faith in him

to be the recipient of his ministries (cf. Matt. 13: 58).

We must not put any bitterness or resentment into Jesus' words here; poignant regret, rather. He knew, besides, that their attitude and treatment of him were prophetic: The nations would accept him, but not his own nation Israel. Greatest Prophet of the prophetic line, he was having the common experience of prophets, of Elijah and Elisha. They had both carried God's mercies to Gentiles (1 Kings 17; 2 Kings 5).

Probably there were other things in his address that aroused their animosity, but it is now intensified by his intimation that Gentiles and lepers have a higher claim upon him—and God—than themselves. What they did amount not only to excommunication and expatriation, but also punishment for blasphemy. This was stoning, one form of which was "precipitation," or hurling the culprit from an eminence upon sharp rocks (cf. 2 Chron. 25: 12. It was common with the Romans, as we know from the legend of Tarpeia).

His calm dignity—the same godly bearing that had disarmed the council police in Gethsemane (John 18: 6)—overawes them and causes them to desist (ver. 30). One wonders if he ever visited Nazareth again. Was John thinking of this particular incident when he wrote, "He came to his own, but his own received him not"? Farrar comments: "If after thirty sinless years among them they could reject him, clearly they had not known the day of their visitation."

II. JESUS' PROGRAM AND THE PROGRAM OF THE KINGDOM. Luke 4: 18, 19

This proclamation in the Nazareth synagogue is a program for Jesus' three years of earthly ministry there in his homeland in his day, and must not be taken too literally and narrowly for his church of our or any time. Moreover, the resurrection and the cross gave a new meaning and new values to the gospel as he had hitherto declared it. One might say that it became the Nazareth proclamation plus John 3: 16; unless we want to embrace the "plus" in that concluding "acceptable year of the Lord."

It is always a question how far Jesus' words should be spiritualized, or taken figuratively, symbolically; yet the church has always read a deeper sense into the ministries listed in verse 18 than bare relief of bodily ills and social distresses. Our Lord was the Great Physician, but only incidentally of the body; he was a social reformer, worker, a humanitarian, but his efforts in this direction were only phases of his great and divine mission, salvation.

No statement of what Christ came into the world to accomplish could be adequate. Indeed, we can hardly think of him as himself confining in human language the fulness and magnitude of his program. Yet it should not be difficult from the Gospel data to sketch in general

outline the character of his ministry. Probably every Bible reader, if not every Christian, has a more or less clear conception of our Lord's purposes (program) as He taught and practised it; and obviously these conceptions will differ, for we do not all read the Gospels alike; the gospel has different aspects to different individuals, and to the same individual under varying life-situations and experiences.

Possibly in the names we give Jesus may be seen attempts to define his nature, and so his program. At any rate, these names are illuminating for an understanding of his manifold ministries.

As *Christ* he is the fulfilment of the rich promises made to God's people of old. Hence Old Testament prophecy tells us something of what God would have him be to the world, to us.

As *Lord* ("the Lord Jesus Christ") he would rule our lives, and is destined to rule the world.

As the *Word* (Teacher, the Truth) he is the voice of God to men.

As the *Good Shepherd* he is the loving Guide and Care-taker of bewildered, distressed men.

As the *Great Physician* he cures all ills (the physical in his own, inscrutable, right way).

As *Friend, Great Elder Brother*, he companions us, especially when we lack human companionship, or find it insufficient.

As *Saviour* we see him redeeming a lost humanity there upon the cross. In this name we sum up all his ministries; for his program was essentially one of salvation, in a large sense.

E. Stanley Jones (in Christ's Alternative to Communism) gives the following analysis of the program set forth in these verses, 18, 19:

1. Good news to the poor—the economically disinherited.
2. Release to the captives—the socially and politically disinherited.
3. The opening of the eyes of the blind—the physically disinherited.

4. The setting at liberty the bruised—the morally and spiritually disinherited.

5. The Lord's Year of Jubilee—a new beginning on a world scale.

6. The Spirit of the Lord upon me—the dynamic behind it all.

Practical Questions for Class Discussion

- ¶ The term "social Christianity" (a "social gospel") is much used. Is it not unwise to employ a term that confines, or splits up, the gospel of Christ? Is not that gospel entirely social, and entirely spiritual, and entirely personal or individualistic?
- ¶ We say that it is futile to try to save men through an improved social order unless in that order they are living as redeemed persons. Give illustrations of this.
- ¶ Again, that it is unreasonable to expect the average man to live as a redeemed person in an unredeemed environment. Give illustrations of this.
- ¶ Do you believe that it is well to work for a social order—of righteousness, justice and purity—that will make it easier for a man to be a good Christian, and better Christian? Or will this weaken the stamina of Christians, make for a degenerate church? What has been the world's experience in this respect?
- ¶ Modern medicine and psychology are emphasizing the interrelation of body and mind, of health and spirituality. Did not Jesus assume this same interrelation, and interdependence?
- ¶ Should you say that the program of Jesus, as announced there at Nazareth and as enlarged by his cross sacrifice, is an eternal one—one that his church of today must follow?
- ¶ What item in the program of Jesus appeals most strongly to you? And why?
- ¶ What hymn, to your mind, most clearly and fully sets forth his program? What recently published books?

of trying to do bodily harm to Jesus. People are funny about such things. They want us around so long as we do what they think is right, but they turn easily against the fearless utterance of truth if that truth hurts. The Nazarenes drove Jesus out of town.

It is easy to believe that Mr. X and Mr. Y, Mr. A and Mr. B and their families, all former friends or acquaintances of Jesus, the son of Joseph and Mary, accepted, applauded and rejoiced in and at the ringing declaration of Jesus. They rejoiced and believed in it in a generic or abstract way, at any rate. Sometimes (have you not observed it?) men will agree, or seem to agree, in principle, but file persistent exceptions to the application of that principle to specific cases. For example, organized labor and business agree in principle that any man ought to receive living wages for honest work. It is not easy to get down to definite agreements about particular jobs in designated factories.

The declaration of purpose of Jesus was humanitarian in its essence. The early Christians accepted Jesus as a living person. Theological differences of opinion may have been unavoidable. All Christian theologians—without exception, I dare to say—will subscribe and do subscribe to the Key Verse of today's lesson. Should there not be sufficient appeal and devotion in this blessed platform of Jesus of Nazareth to enable his followers to achieve unity of purpose and action, though there may be understandable reasons why there cannot be unity in organization?

Before My Class of Women

Olive Woodward Ogg, Monroe, Iowa

Luke leaves us in no doubt as to the importance attaching to the enduement of the Spirit as Jesus assumes his ministry. The Spirit descends upon him as he comes up from the baptismal waters; the Spirit impels him into the wilderness; in the power of the Spirit he returns to Galilee; and he opens his first recorded synagogue address with the significant quotation, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me." If the Son of God, clothed in our humanity, had need of that enduement, how much more the disciple?

It is essential to a clear understanding of this lesson that there be some explanation of the prevailing custom in the conduct of a regular Sabbath service in the synagogue; particularly the fact that any distinguished guest present might be called upon, after leading in the customary prayers of the day, to deliver the address. Certainly, Jesus would not have been considered qualified for that distinction had he been known to the ruler of the synagogue only as the carpenter's son, grown up in their midst. We need to refer to verses 14 and 15 to understand that he had a recently acquired fame which was spreading

TEACHERS' HELPS

In the Men's Class

Charles C. Stillman, Columbus, Ohio

As this is being written the newspapers are full of the declarations of Mussolini—martial, ruthless, determined, selfish. Within the past year the people of Japan have announced intentions of conquest and have demonstrated selfish motives. Herr Hitler has spoken words that cause shudders and misapprehension in the hearts of those who love justice and fair play. The declaration of an office-seeker is called a platform. Political history in the United States over a long period of years would seem to indicate that declarations of purpose are designed to becloud real issues and point

out ways to be avoided rather than followed. Humans are frail. There is a big gap between "I'm telling you what I'm going to do" and "This is what I have actually done."

The platform of Jesus is the broadest, most humane, most significant of any utterance recorded in history or exemplified in present-day experience. We should not miss the dramatic elements attending this utterance of our Master.

It was a home-coming: "He came to Nazareth where he had been brought up." By reading the lesson text you will notice that his friends and neighbors of Nazareth were first astonished, then pleased and proud of their former citizen, and then very angry, even to the degree

throughout Galilee. It seems to have been the custom for any guest speaker, thus hailed to the desk, to comply with a great show of humility, and only after due protest. We can well imagine that Jesus, with customary simplicity, dispensed with this more or less hypocritical performance.

There seems again discernible a direct divine intervention in the passage at which the roll was opened that day. It is to be noted that the passage which Jesus used as his text is taken from both the fifty-eighth and the sixty-first chapters of Isaiah. Such a combination appears to have been customary. Also, we are assured by students of Bible customs that as the scroll was unrolled by the attendant both passages might easily have lain before his eyes. The attention of all in the synagogue was now fixed upon him. No more appropriate passage from the prophets could have been chosen with which to announce the program he was about to inaugurate. Note the deep significance attaching to each point in the quotation—written so long before for this very day.

1. We have already noted the special endowment of the Holy Spirit following upon our Lord's simple yielding to the demands of "all righteousness." He is henceforth consciously, but irresistibly, impelled by that Spirit.

2. The divine unction made him, as it will make every true follower of his, the special minister of the poor. In order to come under that blessed ministration the rich and powerful of earth must first become as little children, poor in spirit. The idea was revolutionary in that day, so much so that even the disciples were known to have cried in astonishment, "Who then can be saved?"

3. That holy anointing, which ultimately compelled the Saviour to give his back to the smiter, afforded deliverance to every other captive; to those languishing in dungeons, and to those bound by the more hopeless fetters of moral and spiritual degradation. "He saved others; himself he could not save."

4. He alone could avail to open blind eyes, whether of a Bartimæus or of a Nicodemus—for he is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

5. Now may the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing, for he healeth the broken in heart, and the broken in body and bindeth up their wounds.

6. He proclaims the acceptable year of the Lord, the year of Jehovah's favor. Thank God, we still live in that accepted time. Today is still the day of salvation. Let us not grow slack while the day of grace is still our own. May our hearts throb with holy fervor at the thought of the millions still blind and bound and bruised. The night cometh. Our Lord paused at the very brink of that next awful phrase of the prophet, "The day of vengeance of our God."

The throng that day was as the throng today. The spiritual import of the message passed as a vapor. They looked with vulgar curiosity for some sign such as rumor was attaching to this one who had been to them hitherto just Joseph's son. So the crowds today hang on the sensation of the hour, eager for bodily healing or for loaves and the fishes. It was but a drama in miniature of John 1:11. His own received him not. And when he intimated that the light which they refused should be turned upon the Gentiles, they shouldered him out of the synagogue, out of the town, to the edge of the precipice. There they paused. They quailed, as men ever did, before his majestic gaze. He passed unharmed through their midst and came down to Capernaum. The world has much rejected Jesus, but, the Patient Christ, he still would be its Saviour.

The Lesson Lived

Susanna G. Fisher

MOTIVE POWER

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me (Luke 4:18).

Nothing else exalts life like a conception of a mission. To be ever accompanied by the consciousness of a work to do in the world is in itself a guarantee of effectiveness. The person who lives under a sense of imperativeness, who feels, "I must work," has the happiest of human lots. Who are the weary, the sick of living, the tempters and wrongdoers about us? They are the men and women who are playing at life, and who have no comprehension of the divine compulsion which drives a man forth to a work, his soul aflame with a holy passion for service.—*Forward.*

THE GLORY OF THE LORD

He . . . healed them (Luke 4:40).

When the golden evening gathered on the shore of Galilee,
When the fishing-boats lay quiet by the sea,

Long ago the people wondered, though no sign was in the sky,
For the glory of the Lord was passing by.

Not in robes of purple splendor, not in silken softness shod,
But in raiment worn with travel came their God;
And the people knew his presence by the heart that ceased to sigh
When the glory of the Lord was passing by.

For he healed the sick at even, and he cured the leper's sore,
And sinful men and women sinned no more;
And the world grew mirthful-hearted, and forgot its misery
When the glory of the Lord was passing by.

—W. J. Dawson.

WORSHIP

As his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day (Luke 4:16).

True worship arises out of and satisfies certain universal human needs. Some of these are the need for an ideal companionship, the need for moral reinforcement, the need for inner harmony or peace, the need for forgiveness and moral recovery, the need for moral leadership, the desire for the preservation of all values.

All these needs could be summed up as the need for the organization of the will. In worship, the individual will meets and recognizes the Universal Will and seeks to become identified with it. The result is the ordering of life's purposes and ideals around some supreme purpose, which one takes to be the will of God. . . . Christian worship is fundamental in Christian character.—*Hartshorne.*

LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

To preach deliverance to the captives (Luke 4:18).

The story is told of a little boy set to watch in a dark mine, who was heard singing. They asked him how he could sing down there in the dark. He said, "I gather up the bits of candles the miners throw away, and when I get enough to make a light, I sing." "I will sing aloud of thy lovingkindness in the morning: for thou hast been my high tower, and a refuge in the day of my distress." Let us gather up little odds and ends of mercies, such as some people throw away, and make a light to sing by in the dark. God's word should be very precious to us. What if we were deprived of it? That would signify deep darkness. Its restoration would be light most joyous.—*Unknown.*

CHANGED

To set at liberty them that are bruised (Luke 4:18).

Only when it is remembered how burning a question in the Orient has caste become through hoary centuries of custom are the example and influence of Christ best seen. Bishop Sargeant, at the head of the mission of the Church Missionary Society in Tinneveli, India, had some fifty-eight native clergymen whom he made it a rule to try to have at his table and to sup with him once every six months. On one occasion, after inaugurating this wise custom of bringing those of different castes together as fellow guests, one of the native clergy, addressing the others, said: "I see in the event of the evening a most powerful argument in favor of our holy religion and of what it has done for us. Fifty years ago you might as well have expected to see fifty royal tigers sitting down in peace at the same meal as such a sight as this."—*Sunday School Magazine.*

Order of Worship

AIM OF THE QUARTER'S LESSONS: From a study of Luke's Gospel to learn the love, sympathy, and helpfulness of Jesus in meeting human needs; to set forth the ways in which he meets these same needs today; and to inspire his followers to service for others in the name and spirit of Jesus.

OPENING MUSIC. Piano, organ, or orchestra. The pieces should be spirited enough to quiet the confusion, but sufficiently sober to put those present in a worshipful mood.

PRAYER, preferably by the superintendent, followed by the Lord's Prayer (in unison).

HYMN. Suggested: "O Day of Rest and Gladness"; "Fairest Lord Jesus"; "Looking Upward Every Day."

RESPONSIVE READING.

Superintendent. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

School. The same was in the beginning with God.

Superintendent. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.

School. In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

Superintendent. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

School. As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

Superintendent. Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

School. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

HYMN. Suggested: "Give of Your Best to the Master"; "I Am Thine, O Lord"; "O Beautiful for Spacious Skies."

SCRIPTURE READING. Suggested: Mark 1: 21-34; or Mark 8: 34 to 9: 8; or Isaiah 53.

SPECIAL EXERCISES, such as birthday offering, missionary, evangelistic, or temperance talk.

HYMN. Suggested: "Jesus Is Tenderly Calling Thee Home"; "I Will Sing the Wondrous Story"; "The Whole Wide World for Jesus!"

PRAYER (by one of the teachers, or the pastor).

CLASS PERIOD.

CLOSING WORSHIP.

MUSIC, for reassembling of classes (dignified, but not too quiet).

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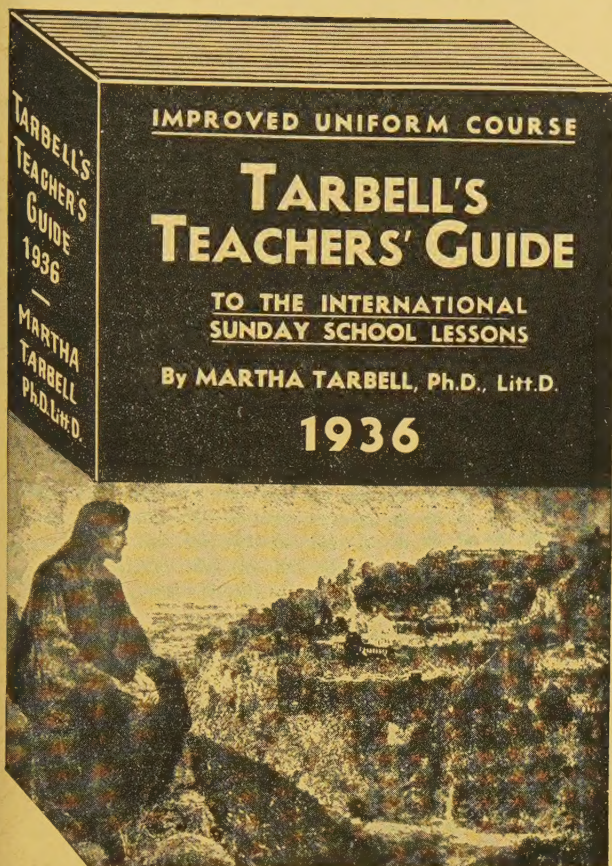
HYMN. Suggested: "We Plow the Fields and Scatter"; "Hark, Hark, My Soul!"; "Take the Name of Jesus with You."

BENEDICTION. Mizpah, or Numbers 6: 24-26 (in unison).

"TRUE worship is a recognition of the worthship of God. It is the open declaration of his existence, the apprehension of his presence, the comprehension of his greatness, the contemplation of his love, and the adoration of his goodness." Worship has many forms. We pour out our souls in hymns of praise. We confess our sins in thoughts and words. We listen to him

speak to us through his Holy Writ. We adore his holy name for the wonderful love wherewith he has loved us. We praise him for the beauties of nature and for the manifold blessings and comforts we enjoy. We try to present our bodies a living sacrifice and our means to support his work. "Thou hast made us for thyself, and our heart is restless till it find rest in thee!"

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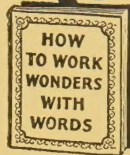
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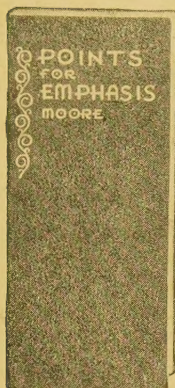
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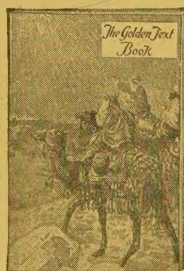
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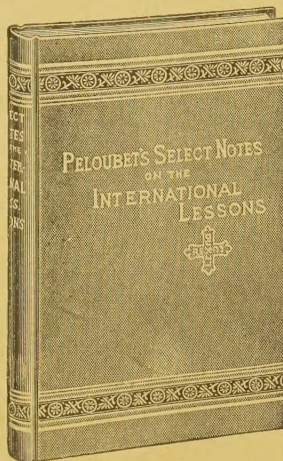
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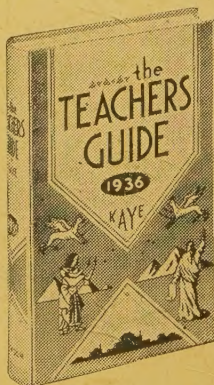


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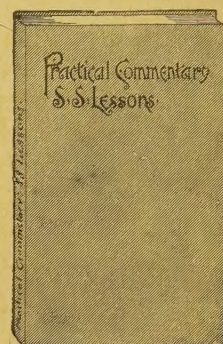
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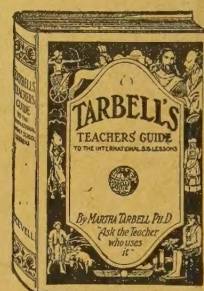


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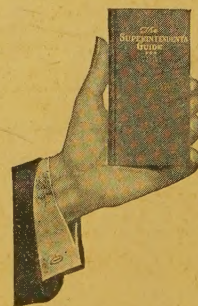


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